THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE, ROMANCE, THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XIX. ROBERT BONNER, PUBLISHER, 40 PARK ROW. NEW YORK, JULY 4, 1863. TERMS, $2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 18.

EVERMORE.

BY ALICE CARY.

Gain and loss, and loss and gain,
  A little less and a little more,
Pain and pleasure, pleasure and pain,
  Ever and evermore!

Night and day, and day and night,
  O'er and o'er, and o'er and o'er;
Out of the darkness, into the light,
  Ever and evermore!

On and onward drives our bark
  From the shore, and to the shore;
Out of the daylight into the dark
  Ever and evermore!

Now a lover with joy to greet,
  Then a heart that is bleeding sore;
Meeting to part, and parting to meet,
  Ever and evermore!

Giving to take, and taking to give;
  Looking backward, looking before;
Living to die, and dying to live,
  Ever and evermore!

True and false, and false and true,
  Store of good, and evil store;
The day of our life is made of you,
  Ever and evermore!

* * *

THE SILVER DIGGER.

A TALE OF THE MEXICAN EMPIRE.

BY ILLION CONSTELLANO.

[ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1863, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.]

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW MION MET HIS PERILS.

The activity and self-possession of Mion were proportionate to his perils. He hurled himself against the bandit-lieutenant with all the vigor of which he was capable. The result was gratifying. The villain's head came in such violent contact with the rocky floor, as he fell, that he lay quivering and insensible at the feet of his late prisoner, and the way to freedom seemed opened.

Such was not the case, however.

As Mion sprang towards the entrance of the cave, three or four of the robbers appeared therein, coming from a nook inside which he had not noticed the day preceding. They were all armed, and at once took up a menacing attitude between him and the liberty he was seeking.

Mion quickly halted. His proposed flight was cut off!

The darkness in which he stood favored the project his mind formed at that instant.

Dragging the prostrate form of the bandit-lieutenant aside, into a deeper gloom, he tore off his outside cloak, hat, etc., and put them on in the place of his own. Drawing on his boots, he rushed back into the midst of the robbers, who were now buzzing like a swarm of bees, lighting torches, uttering questions and exclamations, and confusing and impeding one another.

"Search the pit, all of you," he shouted, imitating the tones of the bandit-lieutenant, as he led the way in that direction. "Be lively!"

The whole force of the robbers was instantly employed in the execution of this order. Mion continued to give commands and utter suggestions, making himself prominent in the gloom, and readily passed for the bandit-lieutenant. He was not free from constant apprehensions, however, not knowing how much or how little the real lieutenant had been stunned by his fall, and he accordingly turned away from the pit the instant several of the robbers were lowered therein, and hastened back towards the entrance of the cave.

The robbers he had seen there were still on their guard, with the appearance of being fully aroused. Moreover, they had produced a light, which effectually cut off our hero's hopes of gliding out unseen.

How could he pass them?

The question was decided with Mion's usual promptness and coolness. The moans of the bandit-lieutenant urged him to instant action. Bounding to the spot where he had left his insensible foe, he shouted, still imitating the voice of the bandit:

"Here he is! I have found him! This way with your light!"

The robbers addressed rushed in the direction indicated by the voice, while our hero glided into the shadows at the opposite side of the cave, went around the group unseen, and sped onward to the entrance of the cavern. In another moment he was outside of the cave, and hurrying along in the direction of the spot where his captors had left their mules on the day previous.

He knew that the discovery of the unconscious lieutenant, and the darkness, together with the confused questions and exclamations of so many men, would detain them a few moments, and vivid hopes and resolutions came to him.

He struggled through wooded ravines and climbed rocky ascents, endeavoring to find the horses and mules; but this hope was destined to be disappointed.

The animals had either been moved, or his memory failed to guide him to the place of their concealment. After wandering till his weakness and exhaustion overcame him, he discovered by a roaring that suddenly broke upon his hearing that he was back within a few hundred yards of the waterfall that concealed the entrance of the robbers' cave!

The next instant he heard voices and rapid footsteps near him, and a party of the robbers swept past him in pursuit.

Panting with his exertions, after his long and weary days and nights of exhaustion, he made out his true course by the aid of the stars, as near as he could, and stole away from the spot.

By this time the hunt had become general. He heard the robbers spreading out in all directions around him, and could hear the loud and angry tones of the bandit-lieutenant.

He instantly saw that cunning and secresy, rather than speed of foot, must save him, if he were saved at all, and governed himself accordingly—pausing and remaining perfectly quiet when any of the bandits neared him, and resuming his way only when their voices or movements assured him that his way was clear.

Suddenly, as he was toiling slowly and wearily along a narrow path, he heard a portion of the robbers returning, with their lieutenant at their head.

"What'll the cap'n say to this?" asked a voice.

"I don't care what he says," responded the lieutenant, sullenly, as he rubbed his head. "I pounded on his door a long time, but he did not choose to appear."

They passed on and Mion resumed his way. After a long and wearisome journey, he reached home about the usual breakfast hour, and found his mother in the deepest affliction at his prolonged absence. He had barely had time to narrate his adventures to her, when she beheld Señor Villaverde approaching the cottage, and called her sons attention to the fact.

"The miserable coward!" he ejaculated. "If he had fought by my side, as a brave man would have done, I should have whipped the robbers at the cabin, without doubt. I don't wish to see him!"

He retired to an adjoining room. A moment later, Villaverde presented himself before Señora Mion, with a look of assumed grief on his face. In as gentle terms as he could use, he announced the capture and subsequent death of her son, at the hands of the robbers.

"Are you sure that he's dead?" she asked, with a quietness that astonished the visitor.

"Oh, yes. He fell mortally wounded at my side, while we were bravely defending ourselves from the robbers. I learn on undoubted authority that he has since died!"

He gave the Señora a manufactured account of her son's encounter with the robbers, and of his own efforts to defend him, etc., winding up with a declaration that he should have reported to her sooner if it had not been for a vain hope that Mion would escape with his life.

"Perhaps the best answer I can make to all of your declarations," responded Señora Mion, "is to introduce you to a gentleman who came here just ahead of you! Behold!"

She had heard her son at the door of the adjoining room, and he now made his appearance with all the celerity inspired by his disgust and scorn. Villaverde sprang to his feet with a wild cry of surprise, as his eyes rested upon the pale and stern features of our hero.

"Go, lying and cowardly wretch!" commanded Mion, sternly, as he pointed the visitor to the door, and never let me see you intrude upon my mother again. I know not what you mean by reporting my death so unequivocally, when you can have no certain evidence in support of your statements; but I do know that you are a cowardly and false-hearted creature! Go!"

Villaverde was only too happy at having an opportunity of leaving the house, and he went away without another word. After a brief conversation with his mother about Viva, Mion went over to see Enriqueta.

"If you're going off to bring soldiers here," said the duenna, after a short conversation with Mion, "you ought to find Señor Torre and have him looking for Viva while you're gone. I told him yesterday that Viva was missing; but he was so occupied with something else that he didn't seem to understand me. He thought she had gone off with you."

"If I knew where Señor Torre is," said Mion, "I would go to him. If——"

"Here's something he left behind him in his hurry," said Enriqueta, producing the chart Torre had made of his silver mine. "It seems to be new, and if you can make any sense of all these marks perhaps you'll find him."

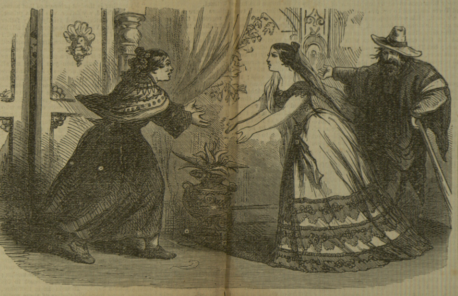
Mion took the chart and examined it some time in silence. He thought he could make out the neighborhood represented, although not the exact spot. Thanking the duenna for her suggestions and kindness, he rode home, ate breakfast, and seated himself to study out the rude chart. A few minutes thereafter his mother found him asleep, so [illegible] his strength been exhausted by his long toils and sleeplessness.

"Poor boy," she sighed. "I have no heart to disturb him. He cannot live without a good sound sleep."

She covered him with a blanket and watched beside him. Mion slept till the middle of the afternoon, and awoke with all his pristine vigor and strength.

"Oh, mother, how could you?" he cried, reproachfully. "Where all this while is poor Viva?"

Telling his mother that he might be absent two or three days, he set out to find Torre.



VIVA'S RETURN TO HER HOME.

CHAPTER XV.

A GRAND CHARGE!

Diego slept by the wayside till about the middle of the afternoon, and then returned to Enriqueta, to be warmly welcomed by her. She again supplied him with wines, and fruits, and all the luxuries of the climate. She treated him with a deference that pleased and flattered him, and he assumed to the best of his ability the character of one of his polite and lion-hearted knights. Each was charmed with the society of the other, and as Torre had left the premises quite at their service, the hours passed pleasantly and expeditiously, despite the absence of Viva.

"I'll tell you what I think, General Diego," finally said Enriqueta—the squire having incidentally remarked that he had consented to serve his country awhile as commander-in-chief (*gefe supremo*) of the national army—"I think Viva saw the ghost of Captain Mion before I did, and that she followed it to the falls; and, in her wildness and sorrow, has made her grave with him!"

The squire pretended to be of the same mind, but he was in reality of a different opinion. He did not doubt that the girl he had seen at Villaverde's castle was Viva. He would have declared as much if he had not been afraid that the duenna would thereupon ask him to go at once to her rescue. As it was, he permitted the secret to rankle in his breast, and contented himself with drinking deeply, in the hopes of banishing all thoughts of it from his mind.

As night approached, the repeated potations of the squire had their effect. His tongue was loosened, his smiles multiplied, and his courage strengthened. He was full of anecdotal heroism, and enchained Enriqueta's attention with tales of his wondrous prowess and martial renown. He insisted upon her drinking occasionally with him, and she obliged him until everything around her wore an unreal appearance.

Out of this state of affairs grew a singular and unexpected event.

It was a peculiarity of the squire that, a certain stage of inebriation once passed, his natural character gave way to the frenzy of intoxication, and in this mood he was capable of designing and executing the most valorous deeds—deeds from which he would have recoiled in affright in his reasoning moments.

This stage was at length passed.

The squire was in a state of furious and unreasoning drunkenness, although still in possession of all his strength.

In this mood, his secret respecting the girl at Villaverde's grew upon his attention. He winked at Enriqueta, flourished his club, and looked wondrous knowing. At last he drew himself up with drunken gravity, and said:

"The hour has come!"

"What hour?"

"The one for which I have been waiting," and he waved his hand out into the darkness of night, which had come over the scene—"the hour for the girl's rescue!"

"Who? Viva? Do you know where she is?" asked the duenna, whose head reeled with the wine she had taken. "Do I dream? Do you mean that you know where Viva is, and that you'll rescue her and bring her home?"

"That's my exact meaning. Wait but a single half hour, and you shall know all!"

He prepared to depart.

It was no part of Diego's present mood to be noisy and boastful. *On the contrary, he proceeded* very much as a prudent and courageous man would have done in like circumstances. Quietly excusing himself for a short time, he left the house and set out for the castle.

His natural cowardice had retired into the background, and the wild vigor and doggedness of his drunken frenzy stood out in bold relief.

He reached the castle of Villaverde unnoticed, and rang for admittance. The response not immediately coming, he rang again. The door was then opened by Villaverde himself.

It is needless to say that the proprietor of the castle was on his guard. He held a pistol in his grasp under his coat, ready for use; but not seeing but one visitor, and not knowing anything threatening about him, he politely invited him to enter. Paquita, who stood immediately behind her master, uttered a wild scream of recognition and terror.

"It's the same man!" she shrieked—"the terrible robber!"

"It is, eh?" rejoined Villaverde, producing his pistol, and retreating backwards into the parlor, in the full glare of its lights. "Is this the man that broke the mirror and ate your jellies?"

"Yes—yes!"

Villaverde turned his gaze upon the intruder, with a mental tribute of admiration to the grim firmness with which he had advanced into the centre of the room.

For a moment they stood staring at each other.

"Perhaps you are the proprietor of this castle?" were the first words that came from the lips of Diego.

"Yes, Señor, I am," replied Villaverde.

"Well, then, I have a little business with you. I am aware that you have a young lady confined here against her wishes. Her name is Señorita Torre. I have come to demand and enforce the release of the said young lady, and I will give you just thirty seconds to produce her!"

The face of the squire looked as rigid and implacable as destiny. Never in all his life had Villaverde encountered a more ominous and determined gaze.

"Quick! Your answer?" cried the squire, advancing boldly upon him. "Speak!"

Villaverde was actually startled by the dogged and peremptory address. He saw that no ordinary parleying would meet the case, and promptly fell back upon the force of arms.

He raised his pistol and fired full at Diego's heart—just an instant too late!

Like a stroke of lightning the club had descended upon the pistol, striking it from his grasp. Another blow, and Villaverde lay quivering and senseless upon the floor.

With a scream of horror and fear, the old housekeeper turned to fly, but had not taken a third hasty step before the vice-like grasp of Diego was on her arm.

"If you do not wish to share your master's fate," he whispered, in the thrilling tones of an implacable resolve, "lead the way to the girl! No delay—no trifling!"

Paquita saw and felt her danger, and hastened to obey him. A moment more, and he was ushered into the girl's apartment.

"I have come to save you, young lady," said the squire, quietly and politely. "You have only to take my arm and go with me, and you will be safe."

Viva was surprised at this second intrusion of the formidable looking stranger, but she readily comprehended by his earnest and direct words that he meant her well, whatever the mystery of his past or present conduct. She gave him her hand, and hurried down stairs with him. She had only time enough to see that Villaverde was moaning on the parlor floor, and then she was hurried out of the castle, and conducted towards her house.

She kept up with the squire's gigantic strides till at least one half of the distance between her home and the castle was traversed, and then she paused to rest, weary and panting with her exertions.

CHAPTER XVI.

PUZZLING RESULTS.

In the meantime Villaverde had recovered his senses—learned from Paquita that the girl and her strange rescuer had just left the premises—and instantly set out for Torre's house, after telling the old housekeeper to follow him as rapidly as she could.

He took a short cut across the fields, exerted himself to the utmost, and reached Viva's home while she was yet on her way.

He saw the duenna out of doors, at the edge of the garden, where she was watching for the return of Diego, and calling upon him in a maudlin sort of way not to expose himself to peril. She was so much affected by the wine she had taken, and so intently watching for her hero's return, that Villaverde slipped into the house unnoticed and secreted himself in a closet opening off the parlor.

A few moments later the squire appeared, with Viva leaning on his arm, and Enriqueta ran to meet them, as fast as her condition would permit. We will not pause upon the joyful meeting, nor undertake to record the incoherent welcomes Enriqueta gave her young charge.

All were soon seated in the house and rejoicing over the girl's rescue. The duenna had no language in which to express her admiration of Diego, and Viva was enthusiastic and grateful. Between the two the squire's mind would have been intoxicated by sweet praise if the intoxicated condition of his body had not prevented him from receiving its full effects.

"Now don't say a word. Don't explain—don't say a word about it till morning," said Enriqueta, as she fumbled about in a closet for a sleeping powder. "Poor child! I can see how completely you are worn."

She stirred up a narcotic two or three times as large as usual, and insisted that Viva should take it, which she did. Diego employed the same interval in rewarding himself with additional *potations, and was soon mumbling something about his exhaustion and a place to sleep.*

"Noble and glorious hero!" exclaimed Enriqueta. "You shall have Señor Torre's own room!"

She showed him into the digger's bed-room, and left him with kind wishes and invocations. To the squire's great astonishment, he found the bed shown him flying around the room with extraordinary velocity, and was somewhat at a loss how to deposit himself upon it. At length, steadying himself against a chair, he waited till the bed came opposite him in its wild career, and then made a vigorous plunge for its centre. He fell a little short, and was soon so much entangled among its legs, that he despaired of mounting it, and exclaimed:

"Never mind—I'm quite as comfortable here!"

He stretched himself out at full length under the bed and was soon asleep.

"Now don't say a word," repeated Enriqueta, as she assisted Viva to her bed-room. "Lie down just as you are, and get a good nap."

The girl complied with an exquisite sense of relief, and Enriqueta muttered a few soothing words, which were unnecessary, however, the weariness of Viva, in connection with the narcotic she had taken, almost instantly putting her to sleep.

The duenna expressed her satisfaction, locked the outside door, and lay down in the parlor, leaving the lamps burning.

Villaverde waited a few minutes until the heavy and regular breathing of the trio showed him that they were all unconscious, and then he emerged from his concealment.

His face looked more fiendish than ever before.

He had comprehended the condition of both Diego and Enriqueta, and a grim smile lighted up his face.

He made his way to Viva's room, of which he already knew the location, and stood over the sleeping girl a moment, and then raised her tenderly but firmly in his arms. She moaned a little and then remained perfectly quiet and unconscious, as he bore her to the door, unlocked it, and passed out.

For a moment he paused upon the steps, looking back upon Enriqueta, while an expression of crafty thoughtfulness flitted over his face.

"I'd like to know the secret of this drunken raid," he muttered. "One thing is certain—I shall not be much frightened by it."

A noise at his side caused him to turn, and he beheld Paquita, who had just arrived in obedience to his orders.

"You see I have her again," he muttered. "We are not yet defeated!"

For another moment he continued looking back upon the sleeping duenna, with a murderous light in his eyes.

"If I thought they knew enough to bring me into trouble," he added, "I'd silence them both on the spot! As it is, I'll run the risk. I have secret rooms enough to defy all they can do!"

He closed the door behind him and set out for his castle.

Enriqueta and Diego slept soundly all night, and until nine o'clock in the morning. The latter was the first to awaken. He was somewhat astonished to find himself lying on the floor, under a bed, but a severe headache and a few moments of reflection enabled him to realize the cause.

"Let's see," he thought. "The last I remember I was getting awful drunk with that old goose of a duenna. I must be at her house now. Probably in the old man's room," and he looked around. "I wonder if I made myself ridiculous? Ah, she was drinking with me, I remember, and may have been as silly as I was."

Seeing some water in a pitcher at one side of the room, he hastened to perform his ablutions, having heard Enriqueta stirring in the parlor. He had scarcely made himself presentable when

Enriqueta rapped on the door, and he went out to meet her. He saw that her head was bound up in a wet handkerchief, and at once inferred that she had been more or less influenced by her potations.

"Oh, noble and generous man," cried Enriqueta, as she ran to him and caught both of his hands in her own. "I thank you for your heroic conduct in rescuing Viva from her cruel foe."

Diego was surprised, and looked inquiringly upon the speaker.

"There! Don't be so modest!" cried the duenna. "I will say what I feel!"

"Modest!" ejaculated the squire, a little cynically. "What have I done?"

"Why, rescued Viva from the castle!"

Diego turned away to hide a derisive smile. He did not believe a word of the heroism ascribed to him. *He knew himself better!*

"I don't doubt your word at all, lady," he said, with his deepest bow. "If I have rescued the girl as you say, it would be one of the least of my many valorous deeds, but—I'd like to see her!"

"Certainly—certainly! I have not been near her this morning, as I wished her to get all the sleep she could, but I'll call her up instantly!"

She hastened to Viva's bed-room—and a wild scream of surprise came from her lips. Diego hurried to the spot, and found her staring wildly around, too much astonished at Viva's absence to speak.

"Santa Maria, guard us," she murmured. "Can it all be a dream?"

They discussed the matter a few moments, and came to the conclusion that the entire affair of the rescue was a vagary of Enriqueta's late disordered imagination!

"You *know* we'd taken a little too much," suggested Diego.

"Ah—yes! I see—I see! If I had been sensible, I never would have thought such a thing of the good and kind Señor Villaverde!"

CHAPTER XVII.

THE AZTEC STONE.

It was near midnight. The scene was the mine Torre had discovered. The old man and his miners had wrought a great change in its appearance. Sheds had been built; smelting furnaces erected; huge excavations made; and vast quantities of pure silver ore obtained. The diggers were all asleep, with the exception of Torre. They lay in a rude cabin, close at hand, while the old man, sleepless and restless, was busy with his new-found wealth;—handling heavy bars of silver he had cast, looking over piles of ore, thrusting fuel into his furnaces, and skimming the dross from his molten seas of treasure.

The picture he presented thus toiling at midnight, in the midst of that mountain scene, was singularly strange.

He had lain aside his elegant suit of clothes, and looked as haggard and dirty as usual, what with his toils in the dirt and his sleeplessness and excitement.

Suddenly, as the old man thus watched his treasure and labored, a stone came rattling down a declivity near him, as if the intruder had slipped in descending the ledge. Torre instantly looked up—and seemed petrified at the object that met his gaze!

On a pinnacle of rock beside and above him, and looking down upon the silver digger, stood a figure the exact counterpart of himself!

Grimly and silently this figure looked down upon Torre, transfixing him with the power and intensity of its gaze. There were the same wild eyes—the same long, white hair and disordered beard—the same tattered garb—the same striking characteristics from head to foot!

The silver digger sank back upon a rude seat, and stared upon the intruder, unable to move or speak—superstition, fear, surprise, and all the more powerful emotions, overwhelming him at one and the same instant.

The figure quietly surveyed Torre a moment, then descended from its perch and approached him—peered into the sheds and furnaces—examined all the ore and bars that the silver digger had left exposed—and then again fixed its eyes upon Torre in a cold and haunting gaze that thrilled him through and through, and noiselessly glided up the rocks, disappearing from his view.

The strange apparition had scarcely left the scene when our hero came down the declivity, from the opposite direction, guided by the chart Enriqueta had given him, and by a lantern he had brought.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed, in his cheerful voice, as his eyes rested upon the silver digger. "How do you do, Señor Torre? I'm glad I've found you!"

He extended his hand.

The old man stared awhile like one in a trance upon the intruder—then his gaze became a ferocious sort of glare, and he advanced a few steps without appearing to see Mion's hand.

"What! Don't you know me?" added our hero, as a sad smile broke over his face. "I am Conrad Mion!"

"Oh, I know that well enough," growled Torre. "What was that Thing ahead of you? No matter, though," he added. "Why are you here?"

"I come to tell you that Viva is missing, and to arouse you to the necessity of an instant search for her!"

"Oh, you do? Allow me to say that it's none of your business where Viva is! You'd better attend to your own affairs, if you have any!"

"The whereabouts of Viva *is* my affair," replied Mion, "since your conduct forces me to say so. What means this apathy respecting the fate of your own daughter? What can have rendered you so dead to the instincts of a father? Ah!" he added, looking around, "you're digging and smelting silver, eh?" This is what claims all your attention!"

"It's nothing to you what claims my attention," declared Torre, sullenly.

"Certainly not, except as Viva's fate is concerned with yours," answered Mion.

"Again it's Viva and Viva!" cried Torre, angrily. "Go home, young man, and meddle not with things that don't concern you!"

Mion again told Torre that his daughter was missing, and that he was overwhelmed with anxieties about her; explained how he had found him; and implored him to join him in searching for her. To all of which Torre responded in the most abusive terms, declaring that he needn't concern himself about Viva; that he would never see her again; that she was nothing to him nor he to her; and that he had better trouble himself no more about her.

"I shall search till I find her," our hero replied. "Since you are so entirely occupied, or so indifferent to your daughter's welfare, I will give her all my attention! I will search the whole country, and bring a regiment of troops, if necessary, to find her!"

He was continuing in this strain of stern resolve and rebuke, when Torre, watching his opportunity, struck him with an iron bar, felling him senseless to his feet.

"You'll trouble me no more," growled the monomaniac, as he proceeded to bind the hands and feet of our hero. "I'll soon ensure your silence!"

Looking carefully around, and assuring himself that none of his assistants were stirring, Torre secured his treasures, extinguished or covered all his lights, and then raised the body of his victim in his arms and to his right shoulder. Gliding away to a shed where a few mules were standing, he placed the insensible man on one of them, binding him to the saddle, and led the animal away.

"You've gained a secret worth ten thousand such lives as yours!" he muttered—"the secret of my mine! I ought to have been more careful about that chart—but only a scheming meddler would have learned anything about it. The fact is, he meant to pry out my secret, while snivelling about Viva; much good may it do him!"

He held on his way with a purpose that could not have been mistaken. All the while ascending higher and higher, he passed through a great variety of mountain scenery, and at length came to the top of a high peak, overlooking a thinly-wooded valley, and towering hundreds of feet above any of the surrounding elevations.

This peak was accessible on only one side—that by which the silver digger had come—the other sides being almost perpendicular, and presenting precipices in height. On its extreme summit, where all the light in the sky seemed to centre, there was a huge stone, perfectly bare, but surrounded by luxuriant grass and weeds; and it was in sight of this that Torre and his mule halted.

The restoration of Mion to consciousness had already been announced by low moans of pain, and Torre hastened to remove him from the animal's back. His next step was to carry him to the gigantic stone noticed. A large snake ran hissing across the rocky plateau as he advanced, and his feet came in contact with bleaching bones; but Torre paid no attention to these circumstances, his whole soul being absorbed in the purpose that had brought him hither.

"This is the place and the hour to dispose of him forever," he muttered, as he laid him down upon the stone. "My mine—the marriage—all I care for in the world depends upon his death; and I'll not shrink from the deed!"

He felt around in the uncertain light, and strange and thrilling discoveries would have multiplied upon any one watching his movements. The rock before him was a huge sacrificial stone, with knobs and horns carved about it at its sides and extremities, after the fashion of an ancient altar, to render the binding of the victim easy and certain.

In a brief space of time Torre had bound Mion firmly to this stone—using, in addition to the quantity of thongs and ropes he had brought, a huge rusty chain he found beside it.

A moment more, and Mion recovered his senses to find himself held as in a vice, and the figure of Torre standing grimly beside him.

"It was here that the ancient Aztecs offered sacrifices to their gods," cried the monomaniac, with all the wildness of his infirmity in his eyes. "It is here that you shall meet your doom."

Without another word, the silver digger returned to his mule, and took his way down the rugged path by which he had come.

Mion had learned where he was from the address of Torre. The spot was said to be haunted by the thousands who had died there in the bloody and debasing rites of the ancient Aztecs. No one came there from one month's end to another. Our hero had been there once, long years before, with two or three companions, but there were few persons living in sight of the Coffre who could say as much. Day and night, in nearly all seasons of the year, the peak was covered with immense flocks of vultures, and Mion knew that they would flock there in multitudes during the high heat of the coming day—great, fierce-eyed birds, bold enough to attack a helpless person while he was yet living and pick out his eyes.

He knew from the manner of the silver digger—who was perhaps better acquainted with the subject than anybody else—that his death was fully expected and counted upon, and his reflections failed to bring him the slightest prospect of avoiding the doom invoked upon him.

He thought of the red and scorching sun that would burn his exposed face and beat upon his head in the morning—of the birds of prey that would surround him, with cries of rejoicing almost infernal—and of the slow tortures of thirst and starvation which would combine with their attacks upon him!

Worse than all, he thought of the horrible uncertainty resting upon the fate of Viva, and almost frantically asked himself where she was at that moment, and what would become of her—and he so powerless to aid her!

Appalling situation!

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

CHANGE OF COLOR IN THE HAIR.

Dr. Wardrop, in a treatise on "Diseases of the Heart," relates some cases of the sudden changing of the hair from black to white. A lady, who was deeply grieved on receiving the intelligence of a great change in her wordly condition, and who had a very remarkable quantity of dark hair, found, on the following morning, the whole of her hair had become of a silver white. Some striking instances of this kind are narrated by historians. "I was struck," says Madame Campan, "with the astonishing change misfortune had wrought upon Marie Antoinette's features; her whole head of hair had turned almost white during her transit from Varrennes to Paris." The Duchess of Luxembourg was caught making her escape during the terrors of the French Revolution, and put in prison; the next morning it was observed that her hair had become white. A Spanish officer, distinguished for his bravery, was in the Duke of Alva's camp, and an experiment was made by one of the authorities to test his courage. At midnight, the Provost Marshal, accompanied by his guard and a confessor, awoke him from his sleep, informing him that, by the order of the Viceroy, he was to be immediately executed, and had only a quarter of an hour to make his peace with Heaven. After he had confessed, he said that he was prepared for death, but declared his innocence. The Provost Marshal at this moment broke into a fit of laughter, and told him that they merely wanted to try his courage. Placing his hand upon his heart, and, with ghastly paleness, he ordered the Provost out of his tent, observing that he had "done him an evil office;" and the next morning, to the wonder of the whole army, the hair of his head, from having been a deep black color, had become perfectly white.

EFFECTS OF SOLITUDE.

To be left alone in the wide world, with scarcely a friend—this makes the sadness which, striking its pang into the minds of the young and the affectionate, teaches them too soon to watch and interpret the spirit-signs of their own hearts. The solitude of the aged—when, one by one, their friends fall off, as fall the sere leaves from the trees in autumn—what is it to the overpowering sense of desolation which fills almost to breaking the sensitive heart of youth, when the nearest and dearest ties are severed? Rendered callous by time and suffering, the old feel less, although they complain more; the young, "bearing a grief too deep for tears," shrine in their bosoms sad memories and melancholy anticipations, which often give dark hues to their feelings in after life.

THE VAMPIRE.

FROM THE FRENCH, BY ALICE STIRLING.

CHAPTER I.

You have often asked me, dear doctor, the cause of my excessive pallor. Listen to me, now, and if you have the patience to hear a long story, I will tell you.

I am a Polonaise, born at Sandomir. That is to say, in a land where legends and ghost-stories are articles of faith—where we believe in our family traditions as much, alas! perhaps more, than we do in the Holy Gospel. Not one of our chateaux is without a spectre, not a cottage but has a familiar spirit. With the rich as with the poor, in the castle and in the cottage, the Prince of Evil is recognized and feared more than the Prince of Peace is beloved. The mysterious noises heard in the corridors, the groans haunting ruined towers, the melancholy sighs issuing from crumbling walls, all impel lord and peasant to seek refuge in the sanctuary, at the foot of the altar, where, in the shadow of the holy cross and grasping some sainted relic, they hope for protection against the impalpable mysterious evils that assail them.

There also two great principles are in perpetual conflict, Tyranny and Liberty. In 18—, one of those terrible struggles between Russia and Poland took place—one of those unhappy struggles in which many a noble race and many a noble house has become extinct.

My father and two brothers were in arms against the new Czar, and I regretted that I was born a woman and could not fight at their side, under the banner of Polish independence—that banner so often unrolled to float in the wind of freedom, so often thrown down and trampled in the dust only to be raised again with higher reverence and stronger hopes.

One day I was told that my younger brother lay dead and cold; the next, that the only remaining son of my fathers was mortally wounded. Then, after a night of agony and tears, my father rode hastily into the court-yard, with his little band of devoted cavaliers—the one hundred left him of the three thousand gallant men he had led, as he so fondly hoped, to victory.

He came to fortify the chateau, determined, if attacked, to perish in the ruins rather than be taken prisoner. He cared for nothing but for me, for whom he feared slavery, dishonor, and shame. He decided to send me at once with ten men out of his hundred to a monastery situated among the Carpathian mountains. Our adieux were not long, for in all probability the Russians would attack the chateau within the next twenty-four hours. My horse was saddled, my father gave me a pair of loaded pistols, embraced me passionately, and gave the order for our departure. For two days we followed the windings of a river, not daring to take the open highway; and on the second we saw the white tops of the Carpathian mountains glistening in the rays of the setting sun; and on the third day we were at their base. For ten days we ascended their steep sides without an accident. Three more and we should arrive at the monastery. It was July; and notwithstanding our elevated position, the heat had been excessive. We had passed the ruins of Niautto; our guide preceded us, softly singing to himself. Suddenly a rifle ball whistled through the air, and the guide fell dead from his horse and rolled down a precipice. A sudden shot and thirty bandits burst from out the rocks, and we were surrounded! Our little band, though unprepared for a moment, [illegible], and putting me in the centre, they fought bravely. These bandits were clothed in sheepskin garments, and were fully armed with guns, pistols and swords. Their chief was a young man, pale, with black hair and large, black eyes. His costume was Moldavian—a robe richly trimmed with furs, and a silken scarf wrought with gold, knotted about his waist. During the skirmish he shouted out all his orders in words that were unintelligible to me.

I saw my defenders fall one after another about me; only four now remained, who were determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible. I saw no hope for us, and throwing aside my pistols, I raised my hands to heaven, imploring aid. At that moment I saw a young man leaping from rock to rock, hastening towards us, and who, as soon as he could be heard, cried aloud:

"Enough! Enough!"

All eyes turned to him. I, terrified and exhausted, fainted.

When I revived I was lying on the grass, with my head on the knee of a man of whom I could see nothing save a white, well-shaped hand, covered with rings; while, standing before me, with his arms crossed and holding his sword, was the Moldavian chief.

"Kostaki," said the person who supported me, in a tone of authority, and in French, "you will please at once to depart and leave this lady with me."

"My brother," said the other, with ill-suppressed rage, "take care; you rule in the chateau, the forest is mine; there you alone are master, here I am to be obeyed."

"Kostaki, I am the eldest, and am therefore master both of forest and chateau. Yes, the blood of the Braukorans runs in my veins as well as yours. I am accustomed to command, and I do so now."

"You may command your valets, Gregoriska, but not my soldiers."

"Your soldiers are brigands, whom I intend at some future day to hang."

So saying, the person who held me carefully placed my head on the turf, and assumed a position where I could see him.

He was a young man of twenty-four. Tall and slender, with large, blue eyes, indicative of firmness and a wonderful degree of resolution. His long, fair hair, a mark of his Sclavonic origin, fell on his shoulders like the arch-angel Michael's. He was dressed in a kind of black velvet tunic; and a cap like that we see in the pictures of Raphael, ornamented by an eagle's plume, was on his head.

The brothers continued their discourse, each growing more angry.

"Very well!" at last exclaimed Kostaki, "the woman belongs to me; she is beautiful; I fought for her; and I shall have her!" and lifting me in his arms, he mounted his horse.

Gregoriska seized a horse without a rider, and vaulted into the saddle.

Then commenced a terrible race. My head, leaning on the shoulder of my captor felt his keen gaze riveted on my closed eyes. I fancied myself Leonore in Burger's ballad, borne away by a phantom horse and cavalier; and when we stopped, I opened my eyes with terror, expecting to see crosses overturned and yawning tombs. The sight that met my gaze was not much gayer; it was the courtyard of a Moldavian castle chateau, built in the fourteenth century.

The two brothers were instantly surrounded by a crowd of attentive servants. Two waiting-women came to assist me from the horse, and Gregoriska signed to me to follow them. In five minutes I was shown into a sleeping room, which, bare and desolate as it would have seemed even to a man, was evidently the best in the chateau. It was a large square apartment, with a divan in the centre covered with green serge—a seat by day—a bed by night. Half a dozen heavy oak chairs were the only furniture. No curtains hung over the large windows. My trunks soon made their appearance. The women offered their assistance; but I decided not to lay aside my riding habit, which seemed to correspond better with the garb of my hosts than anything else that I could assume; but, while arraying my dress, I heard a knock at my door.

"Come in," I said, in French, naturally enough; for, you know, French is the mother tongue of the Poles.

Gregoriska entered.

"Ah! madame, I am rejoiced that you speak French!"

"And I also, sir," I answered, "am happy that I can address you in that language; thus showing you that I fully appreciated the kindness you showed me. It was in that language that you promised to protect me; it was in that language that you insisted on my being brought to your chateau——"

"I was hunting in the mountains when I heard the report of the firearms. Permit me to ask, however, how you came among these solitudes?"

I told him my sad story.

"You are an enemy of Russia, then," he exclaimed. "This title will be of use to you—in the contest that I see before us. The name of Brankorau is not new to you, I suspect, Madame?"

I bowed.

"My mother is the last princess of that name. Her first husband, my father, was also a prince, but of a less distinguished family. My father was educated at Vienna. He appreciated all the advantages of intercourse with the world, and I spent years with him in France, Italy, Spain and England. My mother, during the long absence of my father—(it is not for a son to speak thus of his mother; but, when you know us all better, you will see how necessary this frankness was on my part)—became entangled with the chief of a band of robbers—a Count Giordaki—half Greek, half Moldavian. She wrote to my father asking a divorce, saying that she did not choose to remain longer the wife of a man who had deserted his country. My father died, however, before the letter reached him. I opened it. Of course I had nothing to say in reply, except to express my sincerest wishes for my mother's happiness. I wrote to her conveying the intelligence of my father's death, and requesting permission to continue my travels.

"I determined to reside in Germany, or France; for I could not consent to face the man whom I detested, and who was now my mother's husband. Some time after, hearing of the assassination of Giordaki, I hastened to my mother. I loved her, and I felt for her in her desolation; and one morning entirely unexpected I entered the chateau. At the door I met a youth whom at first I supposed to be a stranger, but who in reality was my brother Kostaki, legitimatised by my mother's second marriage. Kostaki knows no laws save those of his passions; holds nothing sacred in the world but his mother; obeys me as the tiger obeys the arm whose strength he has learned. In the interior of the chateau I am the master; but once in the forest the wild beast in his nature bursts forth. Remain here, therefore, quietly; never leave the shelter of these walls, and I answer for your safety; but take one step outside of the chateau and I answer for nothing, although I will risk my life in your defence."

"What can I do? My father has sent me to the convent!"

"Go, then, if you will. I will accompany you; but I shall not go far, and you—you will never reach that home. No, wait here in patience; watch the progress of events. My mother, notwithstanding her preference for Kostaki, is noble and generous. She will protect you from his brutality. Put yourself under her care. She will love you—as," he continued, with a singular expression, "who can see you and not love you. Now come with me to the dining-room. Be careful and show no want of confidence. Speak in Polish; no one here understands that language, and I will translate your words to my mother, and omit all that seem to me of doubtful expediency. Above all, let no one imagine that I have cautioned you."

I followed him down the stairs brilliantly lighted by torches. It was for me evidently that this illumination was made. Gregoriska threw open the wide door of the dining-room, and a tall and queenly woman advanced to meet me. She wore a velvet cap trimmed with zibbelline fur, and a diamond aignette, with a heron's plume in the front. She wore a tunic of cloth of gold and a trailing skirt trimmed with fur. In her hands was a rosary of amber beads.

Kostaki was also there, wearing the splendid costume of a Magyar chief, and looking stranger than ever. He bowed awkwardly and muttered a few incoherent words.

"Speak French, my brother," said Gregoriska. "Madame is a Polonaise and understands that language."

His mother then welcomed me cordially, and seated herself at the table. The meal was sad and silent enough. No one spoke.

After supper was over, Gregoriska explained to his mother, with much courtesy, that I was fatigued and desired repose after the journey and excitements of the day. The Princess Smérande kissed my forehead as if I had been her daughter and wished me good night.

I went to my apartment, escorted by the two waiting-women, and found no change there, save that pillows and blankets had converted my divan into a bed. I dismissed the servants and remained alone in this enormous room. The moonlight shining through the uncurtained windows mingled strangely with the light of the candle. Beside the door by which I had entered there were two others; but enormous bolts closely drawn satisfied me that I was secure.

I opened the window—it looked down over a precipice—then I understood why Gregoriska had selected this room for me.

CHAPTER II.

The tragic drama in which I played my part now rapidly developed itself.

The two brothers loved me, each in his own characteristic fashion. Kostaki declared that I should be his, and that he would kill me with his own hand rather than yield me to any other human being.

Gregoriska said nothing, but he enveloped me with the tenderest cares and attentions. All the resources of his brilliant education were employed to please me. Alas! it was not difficult: at the first sound of his voice, the first look of his eyes, I had felt my own heart go out to meet his.

At the end of four months, Kostaki had told me more than a hundred times that he loved me. I hated him. At the end of four months, Gregoriska had not breathed a single word of love—and yet I adored him.

Smérande also loved me, and protected me from Kostaki, for whom she seemed to be as jealous as he was himself. She, however, understanding neither French nor Polish, could not plead in his favor; but she had acquired one French phrase; that she repeated to me every morning and evening: "Kostaki loves you."

One day I received the terrible intelligence that my father had been killed; that the chateau was burned to the ground. I was alone in the world!

Kostaki redoubled his entreaties, Smérande her tenderness—each maintaining that in my solitude I required new ties.

Gregoriska had spoken to me of the wonderful powers of self-command and reticence exercised by the Moldavians. He himself was a living example of the truth of his words. It was impossible to be more certain of his love than I already was, and yet had I been asked on what proof I founded my security, I should have been at a loss for a reply; and I must confess that his silence often disquieted me.

One evening, after I had retired to my own apartment, I heard a faint tap at one of the two doors of which I have before spoken. I drew near, and asked who was there.

"Gregoriska," replied a voice that thrilled my whole frame; "and if you trust me—if you believe me a man of honor—you will grant my request."

I was still silent.

"Extinguish your light as if you were in bed, and in a half hour open this door for me."

"Come again in a half hour," was my only reply.

I extinguished the light, and waited. My heart throbbed painfully with suspense and anxiety, for I felt that some event of importance was about to transpire. I heard the knock; I opened the door; Gregoriska entered, and himself closed the door and pushed the bolt. He stood for a moment in silence, imposing by a gesture the same impassive quiet on me. Then, as if assured that no urgent peril menaced us, he took my hand, and led me into the centre of this vast apartment, and placed me on a chair.

"What does this mean?" I cried in an agony of terror; "and why so much caution?"

"Because your life and my own depend on the words that now pass between us!"

I seized his hand in my passionate anxiety; he pressed his lips to mine.

"I love you," he whispered. "Will you fly with me?"

"Anywhere!" I answered.

"Hark!" he exclaimed. After listening for a few minutes, he became reassured, and resumed: "We can only be happy, my beloved Hedwig, in flight. I am rich; we can go to Vienna, and there you will become my wife."

I pressed his hand in token of assent.

"To-morrow," he continued, "I will go to the Monastery of Hango, to make some arrangements with the superior; he will have horses in readiness for me. After supper, come to your room as usual—extinguish your candle as you have done to-night—and, like to-night, I will ask for admittance; but not as to-night shall I to-morrow leave you. You will accompany me; our horses will be at the eastern door, and——"

He said no more, but pressed me to his breast, and, with a burning kiss, murmured "good night," and left me.

Such dreams as I had that night! I saw myself flying with Gregoriska, pursued by his brother. At last morning came. When I entered the dining-room, I fancied that I saw something menacing in the manner in which Kostaki saluted me. During breakfast Gregoriska ordered his horse; his brother apparently paid no attention to this order. Gregoriska rose to take his departure, kissed his mother's hand, begging her not to delay dinner for him, and turning towards me, asked me to accept his excuses for his involuntary absence. His brother looked after him with eyes that flashed with hatred.

The day was endless. It seemed to me that every one watched me with suspicion. Dinner was an hour of torture; Kostaki spoke only to his mother. When I rose to leave them, Smérande, according to her habit, kissed me, and with the usual words, "Kostaki loves you," dismissed me.

This phrase pursued me like a threat—like an omen; a voice repeated it constantly—"Kostaki loves you."

At twilight I saw Kostaki cross the court-yard. He looked up at my window; but I drew back, and he could not see me. I darted into the next room, whose windows commanded a view of the stables. My suspicions were verified. He saddled his favorite horse with his own hands, and throwing himself into the seat, dashed out of the court-yard, and took the road that led to the Monastery. Then my heart stood still—a fatal presentiment informed me that he had gone to meet his brother. I wrung my hands in despair at my own impotence. I paced the floor with rapid steps in the growing darkness, until suddenly I remembered that it must be in Smérande's presence that I should obtain most readily any intelligence of the brothers. I found the mother calmly seated at the window; the table was prepared for the evening meal, and the chairs of the absent ones in their places. I dared speak to no one—indeed, how could I? for no one in the chateau understood my native tongue or French.

At the least noise I started, and I watched the slowly moving hands of the clock with anxious eyes. At nine I heard the gallop of a horse—only one. Smérande heard it too, and looked from the window; but the night was too dark; one horse—only one—was rapidly approaching—but which?

Steps in the ante-chamber! These footsteps were slow, and crushed my heart. The door opened. It was Gregoriska; one moment more of suspense, and my heart would have broken. He was pale; deadly pale. I saw that something had happened.

"Is it you, Kostaki?" asked his mother.

"It is I, my mother!" said Gregoriska, in a hollow voice.

"Ah! it is you. Where is your brother?"

I thought of the question that had been asked of Cain.

Gregoriska made no reply; but the major-domo stepped forward.

"Your Highness," said he, "the count saddled his own horse toward evening and rode off on the rode to Hango."

Involuntarily my eyes met my lover's. Was it a delusion or was it reality? It seemed to me that a drop of blood stood on his forehead. I slowly and carelessly raised my finger to my own brow; he understood me, and passed his handkerchief over the spot.

"Yes, yes!" said Smérande, "and some wolf or bear has led him further than he intended. Where did you leave him?" she said suddenly to Gregoriska.

"Mother," said he, in an agitated voice, "my brother and I did not go out together."

We took our seats at the table, when suddenly screams were heard in the court-yard, and a terrified valet rushed into our presence.

"Princess," he cried, "the count's horse has just come in alone and covered with blood!"

"Oh!" murmured Smérande, turning pale, "it was thus that his father's horse came home one dreadful night!"

I looked at Gregoriska—he was no longer pale, but livid. Smérande snatched a torch and went out into the darkness.

The horse was held by two or three servitors. Smérande went to him, looked at the blood on the saddle, and pointed out a wound on the head of the animal.

"Kostaki has been killed in a duel," she said. "My children, look first for his body, and then we will find the murderer."

In a few moments torches gleamed all through the fields and distant forests, looking like the fire-flies that one sees on a warm summer evening on the plains at Nice or Pisa.

Smérande, as if she knew that the search would be short, stood at the door with the flame of the torch she still held flickering in the wind. Not a tear rose to the eye of the desolate mother—and yet it was easy to see that despair was in her heart. Gregoriska stood a little in the background and I at his side. In a half hour we saw the torches returning, only this time, instead of shining all over the field, they were massed around a common centre. At last we caught sight of a rude litter and the body of a man stretched upon it. As the cortége entered the court-yard I saw the expectant mother; they instinctively lifted their caps and preserved a profound silence.

Smérande waved her hand and led the way to the large saloon, where the body was laid. Then with a gesture of superb dignity, dismissed the servants, and kneeling by the side of her dead son, smoothed away the long hair that had fallen over the face, and looked with tearless eyes upon the blood-stained shirt. The wound was on the right side and had been made by a knife.

I remembered that the same day I had noticed at Gregoriska's side his long hunting-knife. I looked for it now—it was no longer there. Smérande asked for water, and dipping her handkerchief in it, washed the wound.

The scene before me was at once frightful and sublime. This immense saloon, lighted by the flaring torches—these strange costumes, the mother, who was calculating with cool deliberation the length of time since her son had expired—the profound silence; all composed, as I said, a most impressive scene.

At last Smérande rose from her knees. "Gregoriska," she said, "come here and listen to me."

Her son, with a shudder, obeyed. As he drew near the corpse the blood flowed more rapidly and more profusely. Fortunately Smérande did not notice this, for the sight of this accusatory blood would have shown her that it was unnecessary to seek further for the murderer.

"Gregoriska," she continued, "I know that you and your brother did not love each other: he was a son of the forests and the mountains; you a man of the world; but still I am sure that you will permit me to sorrow in peace, and leave to you the duty of avenging his death."

"Give me the name of the murderer, my mother, and I swear to you that before the expiration of an hour he dies at my hand, if you demand that expiation of his crime."

"Swear then, my son, swear—that not one stone shall stand upon another of his dwelling; that his mother, his children and his wife shall perish at your hand. Swear, and while taking this solemn oath, do not forget to call upon your own head the malediction of Heaven if you fail in any particular."

Gregoriska laid his hand on the corpse. "I swear," said he, firmly and solemnly, "that the murderer shall die."

At this strange oath, whose true meaning I alone understood, I saw the eyes of the corpse slowly open; I felt their hideous glare on my face; I felt them burning into my heart—and I fainted.

When I woke I was in my own apartment, the two waiting-women watching at the side of my couch. I asked for Smérande; she was with the corpse of her son, for Gregoriska—he had retired to the monastery. There was no need of flight now. Was not Kostaki dead? There was now no thought of marriage. Could I wed a fratricide?

Three endless nights and days passed away. Waking or sleeping, I still saw those burning eyes.

The morning of the funeral Smérande sent me a widow's dress and deep veil. I mechanically assumed them, and went down. The house seemed utterly vacant; all had gone to the chapel. I followed. As I opened the door Smérande advanced to meet me. She was like a statue of despair. With movements like those of a statue, she kissed my brow, and in a sepulchral tone pronounced the well known words—"Kostaki loves you!"

You can have no idea of the effect produced upon me by this sentence. This protestation of love in the present, instead of the past; this *loves you*, instead of *loved you*; these words from beyond the tomb chilled me with fear.

At the same time a strange idea took possession of me. I fancied myself the wife of the dead man, and not the fiancée of his living brother. The bier attracted me as a serpent attracts the bird. I looked for Gregoriska—I saw him leaning against a marble column. He did not see me.

The monks from the monastery of Hango chanted the psalms of the Greek ritual. I knelt to pray; but the prayer expired on my lips; my mind was in such a state of bewilderment that it seemed to me that I was participating in some fiendish mockery instead of a religious ceremony.

As they lifted the coffin I became faint. Smérande saw me and came nearer, at the same time beckoning to Gregoriska, who obeyed the imperative gesture. His mother wished him to translate the words she now addressed to me.

"You mourn for my son, Hedwig—for you loved him. I thank you for your tears. From this hour you are as much my daughter as if Kostaki had been your husband; from this hour you have neither country nor home save what you find in my arms and under my roof. Go now and let me alone follow him to his final resting-place—then let me shut myself up with my sorrow until I have conquered it."

I answered only with tears to these words. From the window of my sleeping-room I watched the melancholy procession winding down the steep road. The convent of Hango was a half league from the chateau. It was November; the days were cold and short; at five it was dark. At seven I saw torches in the distance—all was over.

I cannot describe to you the strange nervous oppression of that evening; thrills of terror overpowered me. I watched the hands of the clock until they pointed to a quarter of nine—the hour that Kostaki had died. Then I felt a new sensation added to my old terror. Something like a stupor overcame me; my eyes were weighed down with heavy sleep. I staggered to my couch. I heard a step in the corridor; the door opened. I saw and heard no more; but I felt a sharp pain in my throat. Then I fell into a complete lethargy. At midnight, when I awoke, my candle still burned. I wished to rise, but was so weak that I made the attempt three times without success; at last I conquered this weakness, and feeling the same pain in my throat, I dragged myself to the mirror. Something like a pin prick scarred the artery. I thought it the bite of some insect, and, utterly exhausted, threw myself again on the bed. In the morning I awoke unrefreshed and with the same sensation of languor that I had once experienced after being bled. The day passed slowly and sadly; at night the same sensation of sleepiness overcame me. At nine I heard the steps, and my door opened, and felt the same sharp pain. I awoke at midnight, strengthless and pallid. The next night and the next the same thing occurred. The following day I determined to see the princess, when a servant entered to say that Gregoriska wished to see me.

I rose to receive him, but fell back half fainting in my fauteuil. He uttered an exclamation and threw himself at my feet. I repulsed him.

"What are you doing here?" said I.

"Alas! I come to bid you farewell. To tell you that, deprived of your love and your presence, the world is insupportable for me, and I am about to retire to the monastery of Hanga."

"You may be deprived of my presence," but not of my love."

"Then you will pray for me, dear Hedwig?"

"Yes; but not long," said I, with a smile.

He looked earnestly at me.

"Why are you so pale?" he said, quickly.

"If I should tell you," I answered, "you would not believe me."

"No, no, Hedwig; tell me, I implore you. We are in a country like none other; we are in a family like none other. Tell me quickly."

I confessed all—all the strange hallucination that had taken possession of me at the hour of nine—or a quarter of nine. The terror, the deathly chill, the stupor, the step that I heard and the opening of the door; then the sharp pain and the succeeding pallor and loss of strength.

I supposed that my fate would seem to Gregoriska the height of folly, and I commenced timidly; but I saw that he listened with keen interest and vivid emotion. He was silent for a few minutes when I had ceased speaking.

"Then," said he, "you fall asleep each night at a quarter of nine?"

"Yes, notwithstanding every effort I make to keep awake."

"Permit me to examine the little scar on your throat, of which you speak.

"Hedwig," said he, "do you trust me?"

"Can you ask me?"

"Then, Hedwig, I assure you that you have not eight days to live, unless you consent to obey me implicitly."

"And if I obey you, what then?"

"You will be saved, *perhaps*."

This *perhaps* terrified me.

"Listen to me," he said. "In your country there is a tradition of——"

A ray of light dawned upon me.

"Vampires!" I said, calmly. "Yes, I once saw disinterred in a village cemetery forty persons who had died in two weeks in a most mysterious manner. Seventeen of them showed every indication of being vampires; that is, they were life-like with a fresh color; the others were their victims."

"And what was done?"

"The vampires were burned."

"But that is not enough with us. To deliver you from this phantom, I must first know who it is; and if necessary, I will enter into a hand-to-hand struggle with him, whoever it may be. But you must follow my advice literally. At seven, go alone to the chapel; conquer your illness and weakness, Hedwig, I implore you, otherwise you are lost. There we will receive the nuptial benediction; do not refuse me, my beloved! To defend you before God and man I must have the right to watch over you. Then we will return here and wait and watch."

"But, Gregoriska," I cried, "if it is he, he will kill you!"

"Fear nothing, Hedwig. Only consent."

I consented.

At seven I threw a large, black veil over my head, and weak as a dying woman, pale as a dead one, I crept down the staircase and entered the chapel. My lover was there with a priest.

"Hedwig," he said, "with God's assistance, and with the aid of this good sword, I hope to break the cursed charm that menaces your life. Let us kneel before this holy man, who has just heard my confession, and who will now confirm our mutual vows."

The simple ceremony commenced, the priest himself placed on our heads the nuptial wreaths. The good father blessed us, and added:

"Go now, my children, and may God endow you with strength and skill in this struggle with evil spirits!"

We left the chapel, and for the first time I supported my trembling steps by the aid of my lover's arm; and it seemed to me that at the touch life returned to my veins. We together entered the dreary room, hideous to me from the many horrors I had there endured.

At half-past eight Gregoriska said to me:

"Dearest, we have no time to lose. Will you sleep as usual, or do you prefer to be a witness of all that transpires?"

"I wish to see all," I answered.

Gregoriska handed me a green branch still wet with holy water, that had been blessed by the priest.

"Take this," he said; "hold this with clasped hands on your bosom; lie down quietly on your couch and pray to the Virgin; let not this branch fall from your hands; speak not; wait and hope."

I followed his directions, and Gregoriska concealed himself in the angle of the chimney. I counted the minutes. At a quarter of nine the old chill ran over me—the old terror; but I pressed the consecrated branch to my lips and the feeling passed away. Then I heard the footstep, and the door opened slowly, slowly, and—how can I tell you, dear doctor, what I saw?

And then I saw Kostaki—pale as I saw him in his coffin, his black hair clotted with blood—in his usual costume, save that his coat was thrown open and the frightful mortal wound was visible. All was like a corpse save those eyes—those terrible eyes; they were living and lit with supernatural fire.

At this sight my courage increased. God permitted it that I might conquer this fire of hell. The phantom put his hand on the bed; I raised my branch; he drew back in terror.

"Ah!" he said, "she knows all!"

We gazed at each other, the phantom and I; when I saw Gregoriska emerge from his concealment like an exterminating angel—his sword in his hand. He made the sign of the cross with his left hand and slowly advanced. His brother turned, and with a fiendish laugh drew his own sword; but hardly had the blade touched the blessed steel than the arm of the phantom fell powerless at his side.

"What do you wish?" he asked, in a rage.

"In the name of the living God!" said Gregoriska, "I command you to speak. Was it I who attacked you?"

"No," said the phantom.

"Was it I who struck at you?"

"No."

"You threw yourself on my sword, and I am not guilty of the crime of fratricide; you have risen from your tomb, not as a divine messenger, but as a fiend; you have risen from your tomb, not as a saint, but as a demon; and now return to your resting place."

"With her, yes!" cried Kostaki; "without her, *never!*" and he rushed to my side.

"She is mine!" said Gregoriska, and his blade touched the wound on his brother's breast.

Kostaki groaned and fell back, and then commenced a terrible march. Step by step the demon retreated; step by step my husband advanced. Shuddering if the blade touched him, the spectre drew his leaden feet one after the other—the living man pushing the dead one before him—forcing him to abandon the home of his past life to take shelter in the tomb that should be his dwelling for the future. Oh! it was frightful.

I rose and followed them. We descended the staircase, lighted only by Kostaki's flaming eyes. Thus we left the chateau behind us. The moon and the stars had disappeared, and I saw nothing but the fiery eyes of the vampire.

We reached the cemetery, and stood by the side of Kostaki's grave.

"Kostaki," said his brother, "you have still time. Something tells me that you will be pardoned if you repent. Promise me never to leave your tomb again, until called forth by the voice of God."

Kostaki was silent.

"Do you repent?"

"No!"

"Then call to your aid all the powers of Satan—as I call upon the assistance of God!"

A terrible combat ensued. The Vampire fell. I saw that avenging sword raised, and I saw the body nailed to the ground. A frightful shriek, with no likeness to anything human, rent the air.

I rushed forward. Gregoriska was standing, but wavering from side to side. I clasped him in my arms.

"Are you wounded?" I cried.

"No, dearest. But I have fought with death, and I belong to death!"

"My husband," I cried, "come with me! come with me!"

"No," he murmured, faintly. "Lose no time: take some of this earth, saturated with his blood, and apply it to the wound on your throat. It is the only way of preserving you in the future from his horrible love."

I obeyed with a shudder, and applied the fearful talisman to my throat.

"Now, my wife, listen to my last words," said Gregoriska, in a faint voice: "Leave the country as quickly as possible. Hedwig—one kiss! the last, Hedwig! I die!"

I wonder now that I did not go mad; but then I calmly went to the monastery, and summoned father Basil, who came at once.

I refused to return to the chateau. Smérande came to me, and learned from my lips all the events of that fearful night. She listened with no more astonishment than to any common-place tale. When I had finished—

"Hedwig," she said, "your tale is true. Ours is a cursed race. In every generation fearful crimes have been committed. But the race is extinct with me. If my son has left you his fortune, take it; and at my death all I have is yours. Return at once to your country, or, better still, go where God never permits demons and spectres to walk abroad. Adieu, my daughter."

A week after I left for France. As Gregoriska hoped, I was forever freed from the phantom. My health is re-established, but I have never lost the frightful pallor which accompanies even to the tomb every unfortunate being who has felt the fatal kiss of the vampire.

OUT OF TUNE.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"If I had leisure, quiet, repose! If I could escape from this fret and fever of life—from this daily contact with things that chafe and worry; that hurt and agitate. Ah, my friend! There is something wrong. Something out of joint in the constitution of society, when its action is so painfully felt. If I were as immovable as stone; if my nerves were of steel, I might pass through the world with unruffled feelings. But I am a bundle of sensitive fibres, which answer, like a finely-strung instrument, to every touch; giving melody to soft-falling and skillful fingers, and discord whenever a rough hand invades."

"A living soul, fearfully and wonderfully made," I answered. "A delicately wrought instrument, created for celestial harmonies."

My friend looked at me with a face that questioned as to the meaning of what I had said.

"It is not escape from society that you need," I remarked.

"What then?"

"The chording of your instrument with the grand life-chorus. Drop out of your place. Go away by yourself; and you will be as a solitary hautboy, a trombone, a flute, or whatever the instrument may be to which you correspond in the living orchestral world."

"Ingenious and fanciful. But, accepting your thought as true, how can an instrument, finely strung, find its true relation and power where all is discord?"

"Impossible in the nature of things," was my reply. "But there is a grand life-chorus, into which all human instruments, if in tune, may come, each in its turn giving increase to the harmony."

"My senses are not acute enough to perceive this harmony," returned my friend. "I listen; but to my ears come shocks of discord, that send thrills of pain along the strings of my soul. For me there is no hope but in escape from this Babel of sounds. I must get away, and live closer to nature. I must talk with the babbling streams; with the birds; with insects; with sweet airs, perfume-laden; with forest and sky; with all things, in fact, which are in the order of their creation, and so image the Creator. Oh, how I am longing to escape! And I will escape!"

My friend was in earnest, and so, seeking for opportunity, he made his escape, going from the city in which his life had so far been passed, far away into the country, that he might stand face to face with nature, and so be in harmony with her. He found leisure, quiet, repose. The stream which had, almost from its source, moved along in a free current—now hurrying past flowery banks, now flashing back the sun-light in silvery gleams as it swept over stony places or down rocky heights—composed itself to sleep in a tranquil lake.

He found it very pleasant and peaceful for a time. The rush, the hurry, the change, were over. No more discords—no more strivings—no more contact with rudeness and coarseness, with all-absorbing selfishness.

"I am *at one* with nature," he wrote me, soon after the change. "All her peace, and order, and harmony flow into my life. She speaks to me, and I understand her language. She takes me by the hand, and leads me into green pastures and beside still waters. I never understood life before."

The smooth, tree-encircled lake impresses you with a sense of tranquility. You look upon its calm surface, and feel its quiet influence pervading your soul. But, as you gaze down into its bosom, you begin to have an impression of something hidden and hurtful; of a place in which evil things may be at work. Though the water looks clear, it has nothing of that crystaline life so beautiful in the flowing stream. Dark masses of something you cannot make out lie at the bottom. Around the edges weeds grow in wild luxuriance. You begin to feel a sluggishness in the air, and to perceive stifling odors from rank vegetation. How deep and exhilarating is every breath, as you come into the open fields, or ascend some mountain paths again! An hour by the still lake has sufficed. It would be death in life to dwell there.

Very pleasant for a time my friend found it in his new dwelling place, far away from the great centres of humanity. The agitations that swept, sympathetically, from circle to circle of life, did not find him out in his calm retreat—never stirred his heart, reminding him that he was a member of the great body of the people. He was the still lake, reflecting sky and tree, and holding peace in his bosom. The still lake is affected by moral laws in strict correspondence with natural laws. As it was with the lake on a lower and material plane, so it must be on a higher and spiritual plane. There was no escape for him. Reason would have taught him this if he could have gone so far above his sensuous self as to comprehend her clear inductions.

I did not meet him again for years after he dropped away from our social and business world, lost to us as an instrument from an orchestra, or a fine voice from a choir. There was gain on neither side, I think; but loss to both. A few letters had passed between us; then communication ceased. Our minds were not in harmony—they did not chord in the music of life.

Two or three months ago I was in a neighboring city. The call for a public meeting attracted my attention, and I went to note the proceedings. The organization was going on as I entered the hall, and, greatly to my surprise, I saw my friend take the chair. I could not be mistaken in him, for his physique was peculiar. If I had been in doubt, his voice would have assured me. Time, and life, had been a work with him, and through both, his true manhood was coming out. There was an air of strength about him—of self-poise—of will that knoweth no hindrance. I lost half my interest in the meeting because of interest in my friend. How quietly, yet with what a full consciousness of what the assemblage involved, did he, as chairman, hold all its proceedings in the bonds of that rational order out of which so much right action comes. He gave rythm to the whole.

When I stood face to face with him, grasping his hands, and looking into his clear, thoughtful face, I saw that he was a new man. That there had been deaths and births—losses and gains—the laying aside of lower things, and the putting on of what was higher and purer.

"I thought you were vegetating in your country hermitage," I said to him, "and lo, I find you in the very heart, as it were, of the world of action."

"Come home with me," he answered. "We must talk about that. I have thought of you a great many times."

I went with him, and passed the night. He was in business again. The fret and fever of life was all about him. He was once more in contact with things that chafe and worry, that hurt and agitate—if we will let them.

"Tell me," I said, "of your states and experiences during the time you lived separate from the world, and alone with nature. You wrote me that you were '*at one*' with her; that all her peace and harmony and order flowed into your life; that she spoke to you in a language clearly understood; that she was leading you in green pastures and beside still waters."

He dropped his eyes, and looked thoughtful.

"A mere fancy," he replied. "You know in what state of mind I broke away from society—dropped out of the orchestra, to use your own figure, and went away with my solitary instrument, to enjoy its music alone. An athlete, exhausted in the arena, finds sweet repose on a soft bed in a quiet chamber. It fills, for a time, his idea of heaven. But, when the weary limbs have rested, and every organ and fibre is flushed with blood and animal spirits, the chamber becomes as a prison. He could not live there. He would grow sick for want of freedom and action. A similar state was mine. That peaceful retreat into which I withdrew myself, was as the bed and chamber to the strained athlete.

"There was far more of fancy than experience," he continued, "in those fine words about my intelligent intercourse with nature. I expressed what I believed possible, rather than what I experienced. It seemed to me, that I was standing at the door opening into the arcana of nature, and that a hand was stirring it on the inner side. My heart bounded in confident anticipations—which were not realized. The door never turned on its hinges—the mystery of nature was not revealed. I soon wearied of asking vague questions of the trees and stones—of the birds and brooks—of the earth and sky. If they answered me, I did not comprehend their language. The peace, the beauty, the order of external life, did not long transfuse themselves into my soul—nay, transfuse is not the word—did not long reflect themselves from the surface. The old disquiet came back upon me; and I awoke, gradually, to the truth, that disturbing causes were within me rather than without; that my instrument was not in tune. It was a painful awakening. After this, nature, which, at first, seemed flushing with intelligence, grew stupid and dumb. I knew nothing of botany, of mineralogy, of entomology; and the science wanting, there was no basis for a true interest in things below or above the earth's surface.

"A few years of dull, weary, soul-corroding life, and I came back into the world again, something wiser than when I went away to live by myself. I do not see that we have changed in any thing, since my first experience; and yet I find my action accordant with the general action in hundreds of cases where it was discordant before. The change is in myself; my instrument is in better tune, and chords more perfectly with other instruments in the grand chorus of life. There is, I find, a great deal around us that we speak of as discord, when the fault is in ourselves. Of one thing I am satisfied, and it is this; that in the great social body, marred and diseased as it is, there is a life as harmonious and reciprocal as in the single body of a man—a life inflowing from the source of life and order, and by virtue of that Source, in the perpetual endeavor to reform, restore, and bring back humanity to its lost image and likeness of God. We see this in the effort of every community to get just laws, and have them executed for the common good; in the devotion of men to useful employment, each in his sphere; in concerted benevolent, sanitory, and corrective movements, by which diseased and hurtful things may be cast out. Now, just in the degree that each individual brings himself into harmony with this higher circle of life, which is common to the whole, will he find discord and obstruction ceasing. The world will put on a new face for him. She will speak to him in a different language. He will not need to go away into the still places of nature to find rest and peace, for they will abide with him. But, if he narrows his life down to the merest selfish ends, seeking, as some disordered member of the body, to appropriate only and not to give—to act for himself alone, and not in concert with the whole for the health and well-being of the whole—then he will be out of tune. His life will be jarred by perpetual discords, and he will vainly imagine that he is suffering from defect of harmony in society, when the defect is in himself.

"This," added my friend, "is the lesson I have learned. Taking my peculiar mental construction, there was no way for me to learn it but the hard one of experience. I had to drop out of the orchestra and try my instrument alone. What poor music I made, sitting afar off in solitary places by myself! I thought it passing sweet at first; but its thinness and monotony soon wearied, and at last disgusted me. I longed for choral harmonies. How they ravished my ears when their chorded delights broke into them again!"

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

There is many a man who never has a large or valuable thought. His mind is nothing but a spider that lies in wait in the cobweb of his brain to catch flies.

Pictures must not be too picturesque. Nothing atonishes men like common sense and plain dealing. All great actions have been simple, and all great pictures are.

The sweetest music is not in the oratorio, but in the human voice when it speaks from its instant life tones of tenderness, truth, or courage.

Babylon, Troy, Palestine, and even early Rome, are passing into fiction. No anchor, no cable, no fences avail to keep a fact a fact.

Great works are but the reproductions of great thoughts. The true poem is the poet's mind; the true ship is the ship-builder.

Very precise people should know that we don't care most for those flat-leaved flowers that press best in the herbarium.

Some women think that virtue was given them as claws were given to cats—to do nothing but scratch with.

Womanhood is greater than wifehood. It comprehends and embraces it. The best woman makes the best wife.

Health is a duty. A woman of twenty, in comfortable circumstances, should be as much ashamed of being dyspeptic as of being drunk.

If you don't know what to do it is the strongest of all providential indications that you should do nothing. Give yourself the benefit of the doubt.

The soul, like the pool of Bethesda, is sometimes troubled by an angel, and then it may have a healing and life-giving power.

Woman must remember that she brought more sin and misery into the world by her eating than ever man has by his drinking.

As we grow old, we should grow reverent. Nature keeps our heads covered in our youth, but uncovers them in our old age.

Vice is more revolting among the high than among the low, as filth disgusts one more in the parlor than in the stable.

Some rich men keep cross dogs around their houses, so that the hungry poor who stop to "get a bite" may get it outside the door.

A woman may be surprised, astonished, taken all aback, but never dumbfounded.

Women can keep a secret, but it generally takes a good many of them to do it.

Coin is quite idle now. But some of our rascals, if they could get it, would make it *sweat*.

People sometimes undertake to go ahead and find they can't go a single foot.

Soul is stronger than circumstance. If a girl is a fool in silks, she will be no less a fool in calico.

The girl who allures and deceives with a kiss is convicted of hypocrisy out of her own mouth.

Those who go to festivals got up for the relief of the poor eat to fill other people's stomachs.

He who has a heart for his lesson will soon have his lesson by heart.

Never marry a woman till you know where her dress ends and her soul begins.

It is better to be ready and not go than go and not be ready.

Many people have a great deal of their own religion and none of God's.

Military buttons are very attractive to a woman, especially if they are also bachelor's buttons.

If men will but amuse the world, it will freely forgive them for cheating it.

You may safely differ with the liberal, but be sure you agree with the bigot.

When men are long indifferent toward us, we grow indifferent to their indifference.

It is said to be misprision of treason to ask a soldier to take dinner and dessert.

A sour temper bites ugly lines into one's face *like aquafortis.*

CURRENT ITEMS.

A servant-girl, living in a family in Brooklyn, whose mistress had implicit faith in her honesty, having missed several articles of value, which the girl had energetically helped her to hunt for without success, at last told a policeman of her losses and asked him for aid; whereupon he called at the house, and asking where the servant-girl's room was, proceeded thither immediately, where, in the bed tick among the husks with which it was filled, and in various other places of concealment, he found most of the missing articles, and the girl promised soon to produce the rest of them, which she did, and was then sent to prison to await her trial for theft.

Eight or ten evilly-disposed young men attempted to badger a carman, in Front street, one evening lately, as he was driving home from his day's labor; and in order to annoy him, some of them caught his horse by the head, and others jumped upon the cart; whereupon the carman seized a heavy stake and attacked them so furiously that he soon laid them sprawling in the street, and then drove off in triumph, leaving such of his assailants as could walk without assistance to help along those who could not.

Late Richmond papers speak of the gamblers and rowdies in that city as being the greatest pests imaginable, and call upon the government to conscript the whole of them without reservation, and set them at work on the fortifications of the city, or of the field works necessary for the protection of the Confederate armies at various points. "Why should decent people be compelled to bear their share of the labors and perils of the war, and these wretches be allowed to infest the city?" indignantly asks one of the papers.

A party of hunters, in Oregon, who were hunting along some of the valleys of the Columbia river, not long since, were attacked by a half-famished grizzly bear one evening, that tore down a horse with horrible ferocity, and at once began tearing its flesh from its bones, while the poor creature was yet alive. But half a dozen rifle bullets soon gave the monster more than he could digest, and an ounce ball through his brain finished him.

Several boys, from eight to fourteen years of age, were playing on a number of logs moored in Gowanus bay, one day a short time since, and becoming absorbed in their sport, they did not observe the rising of the tide, until it was too late to get ashore, and they would have been kept on the logs many hours or perhaps drowned had not some gentlemen who were passing discovered their situation and had a boat sent to bring them off.

Several stevedores, carmen and others, got into a promiscuous row in South street, one afternoon not long since, during which a looker-on was hit on the head by a stone thrown by one of the belligerents, which knocked him down, and he lay in a state of insensibility until the police came up and dispersed the cowd, and carried him into a shop near by, where he was rerstored to his senses.

A little girl, about seven years old, was run over in Grand street, the other afternoon, by a grocer's wagon, and injured so badly she could not speak, and as there was nothing about her whereby she could be identified, she was taken to a hospital. One of her arms was broken, and her head seemed to be seriously injured.

A woman who was well dressed and of a respectable appearance, was arrested in the Sixth avenue, the other evening, for attempting to pass shinplasters as United States postal currency, which they were made to resemble, and of which she had a large supply. The shinplasters were poor imitations of fifty-cent bills.

Henrietta McMonahan, a girl living in Williamsburgh, set her clothes on fire at the range one morning not long since, while she was getting breakfast, and before she got relief her face and breast were burned so badly that it was supposed she would die from the effects of her injuries.

As a number of boys and young men were bathing in the East river, near Greenpoint, one day lately, some of them swam too far out, and not being expert swimmers, and the tide being strong, one boy was drowned, and some of the rest were rescued only after much difficulty.

A child, about five years old, fell from the second-story window of its parents' residence in Grand street, one afternoon recently, and although it struck heavily upon the ground, it did not seem to be seriously injured.

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 4, 1863.

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NATIONAL INSULTS.

THE DISMISSAL OF MR. CRAMPTON.

BY EDWARD EVERETT.

It will be recollected that at the time of the "Trent" affair, the English press, almost without exception, for the unchristian purpose of goading the public sensibility up to the war pitch, represented the capture of Messrs. Mason and Slidell as one of a series of premeditated insults offered by the Government of the United States to Great Britain. This was done, in face of the official assurance of our government, given before any steps were taken by that of England, that Captain Wilkes had acted of his own accord, and without any instructions, special or general, from Washington. It seems to have escaped the journalists and other writers, engaged in this unworthy attempt, that it was rather a sorry compliment to the manhood of England to represent her as having for half a century tamely pocketed a series of affronts, put upon her by America while we were united and strong, and as rushing into war to avenge an insult which, as was asserted, we had been so insane as to offer her while we were staggering under the burden of a frightful civil war. But neither the glaring improbability of the conduct imputed to our government, nor the stain implied upon the honor of their own by years of tame acquiescence, had the least effect upon the periodical or newspaper press of Great Britain. The calumny was repeated from journal to journal, till it passed into the popular belief. Even so candid a person as Mr. Loring's correspondent assumes it as an admitted fact.

I have, in former numbers of this series of papers, nearly gone through the list of these alleged insults, and shown how unfounded is the charge with respect to all of them; *how nearly, with respect to some of them, the truth and justice of the case are strongly on the other side. By the highest British authority*, I proved this to be signally the case with reference to the North-eastern boundary. Questions of more immediate interest having, in the meantime, intervened, I have devoted my attention to their discussion. I now resume the consideration of the so-called "National Insults," of which one or two only remain to be examined.

It will be recollected that, in a very elaborate and carefully prepared article in the London Quarterly Review (January, 1862), which may, more than any other journal, be regarded as the organ of the political and literary aristocracy of England, it was remarked, relative to the "Trent" affair, that "the conduct of America toward England, for the last fifty years, has been uniformly too offensive to permit us to think that the late explosion of ill will was accidental, and it has culminated at last in an outrage which leaves us no alternative but reparation or war. We have borne much patiently and long. * * * Let us briefly recapitulate a few facts, and then ask whether the behavior of the United States to this country has been that of a loyal friend or of *a grasping and bullying adversary*."

With this amicable object in view, the writer, who is not a venal penny-a-liner, but, if we are correctly informed, a person of high social and political position, proceeds to his cheerful task of raking open the ashes of the last half century, to find the wherewithal to convince his government and countrymen that they have, during all this time, been the passive victims of a series of studied insults. The last named of these is the dismissal of Mr. Crampton. It is stated in the following terms:

> "During the war with Russia, Mr. Crampton, our Minister at Washington, unwisely, as we think, endeavored to avail himself of the offer of British subjects residing in America to enlist for the Crimea. He paid the passage money of men who wished to embark in the service. He thought himself justified in so doing, fortified as he was by the opinion of an American judge declared in open court, that such an act was not forbidden by the laws of the United States. But the British Government, before any complaint was made, prohibited any further enlistment; and when the American Government did complain, it made an apology for the unintentional offence. Surely a high-minded and honorable power should have been satisfied. If we had done wrong we had apologized. No other reparation was asked for, as in truth there could be none. But there seemed to be an opportunity of insulting us with safety, and gratifying the vanity of the most vainglorious nation on earth. Our ambassador was dismissed, and, as by the Law of Nations which *we* respect, the dismissal of an ambassador is not a *casus belli*, we again acquiesced. Great was the triumph of America. The lion seemed to have quailed before the eagle, and the idea became more firmly fixed than ever that England did not dare to go to war with the United States."

Now every statement of fact, without exception, in this passage is inaccurate; the merits of the question are studiously kept out of sight or misrepresented, and the real cause of Mr. Crampton's dismissal wholly ignored. The enlistment of recruits to serve against a foreign power is not only forbidden by our laws, but equally so by the Law of Nations and the foreign enlistment law of England. Mr. Crampton's organized system of recruitment, instead of being his own "unwise" act, was undertaken with the knowledge and approbation of his government, and in pursuance of an act of parliament of the preceding session. The British Government did not prohibit it "before any complaint was made," and Mr. Crampton, persisting that he was not violating the law of the United States, continued his operations after the discontent of our government was known to him. It was not because the explanations of the British Government were not satisfactory that Mr. Crampton was dismissed; both Mr. Marcy and Lord Palmerston declared that they were mutually satisfactory. He was dismissed because his own conduct was highly objectionable, and the terms in which he had spoken of members of the American Cabinet, in the despatches published by his own government, were personally offensive.

But I will not rest the case on any statement or opinion of my own. Fortunately there is authority, which will not be suspected of leaning toward the American side of the question. At the session of Parliament next following the dismissal of Mr. Crampton, the subject was brought up in the House of Commons, and that after the communication of all the papers in the case.

A motion was made on the 30th of June, 1856, by Mr. G. H. Moore, that "the conduct of her Majesty's government, in the differences which have arisen between them and the government of the United States, on the question of enlistment, has not entitled them to the approbation of this House." In the course of his speech in support of his motion, he charged Mr. Crampton with knowingly violating the law of the United States, as explained to him by his own legal adviser; he accused Lord Clarendon of approving Mr. Crampton's proceedings, and of maintaining that they did not violate the law; and he said "the English people could not object to the course taken by the American government, or to the manner in which they had vindicated their own honor." The attorney-general replied to Mr. Moore, defending the government; but, according to the abstract of the debate in the Annual Register, not uttering a word against the dismissal of Mr. Crampton. He was followed by Sir F. Thesiger, afterwards Lord High Chancellor. This distinguished jurist declared, that "the attorney-general, in his opinion, had taken a very extraordinary and wholly unsound view of international law, which had unfortunately been adopted by Mr. Crampton and endorsed by Lord Clarendon." Sir Frederick found in the papers "indications of secresy regarding the enlistments, which he considered strong proofs that the parties knew that their proceedings were illegal, and he maintained that Lord Clarendon's replies to the complaints of Mr. Buchanan were neither distinct nor explicit." Finally, "he condemned what he termed the bold assertion by Lord Clarendon of a claim, which the American government could not concede, and he insisted that England had thereby *driven that government into a position which made it absolutely necessary* to take steps to vindicate their sovereign rights, and to repudiate a principle deemed by them erroneous, but which Lord Clarendon had maintained in a high tone. *If her Majesty's government*," he observed in conclusion, "*were not justified in the clandestine and secret scheme they had set on foot and carried out, for the purpose of evading the neutrality law of the United States, the dismissal of our minister was perfectly right on the part of the American government, and we must submit to an indignity and an insult in consequence of the acts of our own.*" Mr. Baillie declared that the instructions under which Mr. Crampton acted, "were, in his opinion, *written for the express purpose of evading the municipal law of the United States.*" Sir George Grey, in vindicating the government, admitted that, "although every precaution was taken by Mr. Crampton to prevent any violation of the municipal law of the United States, it did appear that persons had engaged in the transaction, professing to act with an authority they had never received, and whose proceedings were calculated to compromise our friendly relations with the United States." Mr. Milner Gibson asserted that "there were passages in Lord Clarendon's *dispatches, than which nothing could be more insulting to the United States. * * * In regard to the enlistment question, our government* had put their own construction on the laws of the United States, and then alleged that their acts had not broken those laws. By means of an organized 'system of persuasion,' carefully concealed from the American government, they had attempted to induce persons to leave the United States to enlist in the foreign legion, and then they said there had been no persuasion and no concealment. * * In direct and deliberate violation of the law, the agents of the government, Mr. Crampton, Consul Matthew, Mr. Howe, had supplied money to the persons engaged in recruiting, and the government were responsible for the acts of their agents." Mr. Baxter, "an independent member," vindicated the government, and "regretted that President Pierce's cabinet had failed to reciprocate its conciliatory spirit, but admitted that Mr. Crampton had acted injudiciously and even illegally." Mr. Baxter, with all his "independence," had evidently never heard of the proverb taken up of old, against attempting to sit on two stools at once. Mr. Gladstone, though deeming it inexpedient to adopt Mr. Moore's motion, condemned the course of the government. He maintained that the apology, on which so much stress had been laid by Sir George Grey (as is also done by the Quarterly Reviewer) was illusory. It was conditional. "If no wrong had been done, such an apology ought to have been accepted,* but if wrong had been done, such an apology was no apology at all. In the first place he [Mr. Gladstone] charged the government with practising concealment, and, in the second place, he maintained that the American government were deluded and misled; the law was knowingly broken by the agents of the British government." He then proceeded to argue the question at length, and proved from the evidence on the trials, that there had not only been concealment, but intentional deception by means of statements "not based on truth" on the part of Mr. Crampton and his official associates, and he wound up by declaring that "we [the British government] began a system of concealment; we took measures calculated to mislead; we continued to do, for many months, what we professed to have abandoned; and yet it was said that the American government had no just cause of complaint. The result was a most extraordinary state of things. The American government acquits the British government, but at the same time it punishes Mr. Crampton and the three consuls; while the British government maintains and acquiesces in the acts of its agents, and yet accepts with satisfaction its own acquittal."

The solicitor general replied to Mr. Gladstone, and urged that though the government of the United States were displeased with the conduct of Mr. Crampton, they were abundantly satisfied with the explanations given by the British government of their own course. Sir John Pakington fully concurred with Mr. Gladstone, and believed that "no dispassionate man could rise from the perusal of the papers, without feeling that the conduct of her Majesty's Government had been such as to compromise the character of the government of this country [England], and to endanger the peace of the world, while they had been compelled to offer a humiliating apology to the United States, and to submit to the indignity of having their ambassador dismissed, *sensible that their conduct would not bear retaliation*. He then passed in review some of the prominent topics, and *insisted that the facts bore out the charge of the American government*." Lord Palmerston closed the debate by a reply to Mr. Gladstone, rebuking that gentleman severely for his attempt to convince the Americans that they ought not to have accepted the explanations of the British government, and thus keeping open a controversy, "which, *as far as the governments are concerned, has been terminated in a manner deemed satisfactory to both*." Mr. Gladstone had argued that as the apology made to the United States was conditional, the government, by denying that any wrong had been done, in effect refused to apologize. Lord Palmerston met this by saying they had "apologized by deeds" if not by words, in not retaliating on Mr. Dallas "when Mr. Crampton and the consuls were declared unacceptable by the United States."

Such were the views of this matter taken by some of the ablest members of the British Parliament. Two of those, Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Milner Gibson, who denounced the conduct of the British Government most emphatically and vindicated that of the United States, are now members of the English Cabinet. With the express testimony of men like Lord Chelmsford (Sir F. Thesiger), Mr. Milner Gibson, Mr. Gladstone, and Sir John Pakington, that the United States were the party wronged in the controversy; with the declaration of Lord Palmerston, that the question had been settled in a manner satisfactory to both governments, and his admission, in substance, that Mr. Crampton had been rightfully dismissed, what words of censure are sufficiently severe for a journalist like the Quarterly Reviewer, who, at a moment when the friendly relations of the two countries are seriously endangered, parades that dismissal in terms the most derogatory and insulting, among "the facts" which settle the question "whether the behavior of the United States to England has been that of a loyal friend or of a grasping and bullying adversary?"

Boston, 8th June, 1863.

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* Mr. Gladstone's remark probably was, "Such an apology ought not to have been made." But I give the sentence as I find it in the Report.

HOTEL LIFE.

American Hotels are the best in the world. Probably this is one of the reasons why so many thousands of our citizens make them their permanent abodes. In this country hotel life is fashionable, and it must be admitted that it is *convenient* to live in a large, well-ordered caravansary, where an attendant ready to do your bidding stands framed in the door-way of your room within thirty seconds after your finger has touched the spring of the bell, and an unlimited variety of well-cooked edible luxuries is placed before you every day. The expense, too, is lighter than that of "keeping an establishment." But there is an indescribable something called *comfort*—a very comprehensive word, that—which is not comprised among the items of an hotel bill of fare. Besides, a man fed and lodged for a stipulated sum per week in a sort of human livery stable, no matter how splendid it may be, does not, and cannot, feel thoroughly independent. There is no real independence without a *home*, and *there only* can the purest, the highest, the holiest enjoyments of life be realized. Nothing, it seems to us, can make a hotel seem *home-like*. No matter how well it may be conducted, there is too much hubbub, too much traffic, too great a crowd, for a man of domestic habits. Home implies quiet, privacy—and who can be quiet or private in a place where two or three hundred "transient persons" are coming and going every day. One might as well expect repose in the stock-market during 'change hours. A man's house is his castle—into which, as Blackstone has it, though the "wind and the rain may enter, the *king* cannot." But a hotel *belongs to everybody*. It is *a temple dedicated to the travelling community*, and what does the *travelling community* care whether the *stationary community sleeps* o' nights or is kept awake by its trampling boots, that thunder over the stairs and along the passages at all hours between dark and dawn. A fashionable *khan* may be pleasant enough for gay gossip-loving wives and dashing Benedicks, but it is not the place where a rational family, the members of which live for each other, and the head of which appreciates his responsibilities as a husband and a father, would desire to set up its household gods.

HIGH PRESSURE.

This is a high pressure age, and we are bound to keep the "machine" of human civilization at full speed, even if we sit on the the safety valve. People talk faster, think faster, eat faster, fib faster, and make and lose fortunes much faster than they did in the slow and respectable Long Ago. Fulton gave the human race a wonderful impulse, and it has worn the "shoes of swiftness" ever since—changing them every now and then for a new and improved pair. Old people cannot *live* the pace, and so they die to be out of the way. No one can guess where this sort of thing is to stop. Stop!—it *won't* stop, it *can't* stop. Society has got an unstoppable, patent, perpetual-motion spring leg on, and as long as the world goes round the rush must continue. Revolutions never go backwards, and a revolution in science, or art, or political economy, or social philosophy, or something else, is *inaugurated* (we believe that's the word) every day. Occasionally we break things, but "it's of no consequence," as Toots remarks when he sprains his ankle in stumbling over a chair. The great Shibboleth of the age is *push!* and you must conform to it or be run over. Nobody knows where the goal is. It is a subject of conjecture and speculation like the North Pole. *Our* idea is that mankind is engaged in chasing a moveable steeple, and that, as the object moves if anything a little faster than we do, there is no earthly probability that the steeple chase will be finished while "grass grows and water runs." So far as we can judge, there is but one thing that is not now done faster than in the olden time. We refer to *marrying*. Judging from the readiness with which divorces are obtained, the nuptial knot is not tied quite as *fast* as it used to be a century or so ago.

"HELP."

Ladies in search of "help" at the Intelligence offices, or at the Emigrant dépôt at the Battery, find it rather difficult to answer satisfactorily all the questions put to them by the girls they wish to engage. Of course, these young women have a right to know what sort of places they are asked to go to; but considering that a good many of them are utterly ignorant of the duties they are expected to perform, they should not be *too* exacting in the matter of furniture, and other sumptuary articles. Would it not be well for housekeepers to anticipate the inquiries usually made by the "help" at the places referred to, by stating as concisely as possible the *inducements* they have to offer to domestics in want of eligible situations. A lady-friend of ours some time ago put an advertisement in one of the city papers, which covered the whole ground so far as *her* establishment was concerned. Here is the important part of it:

> "* * * The situation of the house is pleasant and healthy, in a lively and fashionable street. Places of amusement within easy reach. All processions and parades pass the front windows. The front kitchen is neatly carpeted, and furnished with mahogany chairs and table, and a lounge. The pastry is all sent in from the confectioner's, except such as the cook may choose to make for her own company. Wages $10 a month, and the usual kitchen perquisites."

THE ROMAN EMPERORS.—No. 18.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

CLAUDIUS AND AURELIAN.

When Claudius was accepted by one Roman army as emperor of Rome, Aureolus, who had been nominated emperor by the army of the Danube, was held in siege in the city of Milan. Claudius placed himself at the head of the besieging army, and Aureolus was compelled to surrender unconditionally to the conqueror. With generosity quite remarkable in those times, Claudius pardoned him. An anecdote illustrates his character. As a general, in accordance with universal custom, he had pillaged unmercifully. A poor woman gained access to him, and throwing herself at the feet of Claudius, the emperor, complained that Claudius, the general, had robbed her of her patrimony. The emperor blushed, and ordered that immediate and ample restitution should be made.

The northern barbarians, of various names, who fought under the banner of the Goths, launched on the banks of the Dneister, one of the great rivers which flow into the Black Sea, a fleet of two thousand, or as some contemporary historians say, of six thousand barges. By these, and by accompanying bands on the shore, an army of three hundred and twenty thousand descended the Bosphorus, and made a simultaneous attack on the shores of Europe and of Asia. One band of them, crossing the mountains of Macedonia, advanced to the frontiers of Italy. The letter which Claudius addressed to the senate on this occasion, in its melancholy yet decided tone, shows that while he was fully conscious of the danger which menaced the empire, he was resolved to meet that peril with all the energies which mortal courage could marshal.

> "Conscript fathers!" he writes, "three hundred and twenty thousand Goths have invaded the Roman territory. If I vanquish them, your gratitude will reward me. Should I fall, remember that I am the successor of Gallienus. The whole empire is exhausted. We are in want of darts, of spears and of shields. The strength of the empire, Gaul and Spain, are usurped by Tetricus. We blush to acknowledge that the archers of the east serve under Zenobia. Whatever we shall perform will be sufficiently great."

Claudius developed astonishing military genius. Inspiring his troops with new enthusiasm, he fell upon the barbarians with such fury, that fifty thousand, it is said, were slain in one decisive battle. With great difficulty the remnant, covering their retreat with moveable fortifications, retired from the field. The Romans obtained immense booty from the camp of the Goths, and many thousand, who were taken captive, were made slaves. This was the custom in those days. This was the slavery which existed in the time of our Saviour and his apostles. So considerable was the number of female captives, that every soldier obtained two or three women to his share. There are men in this nineteenth century, who dare to say that this slavery is in accordance with the will of our Heavenly Father. After a short but eventful reign of two years, during which the empire seemed to regain somewhat of its pristine vigor, Claudius was seized by a pestilence which swept his camp, and suddenly died. He had acquired, in a high degree, the respect and homage of the nation. Upon his dying bed he gathered his officers around him, and recommended to them Aurelian, one of his ablest generals, as his successor on the throne.

Aurelian was the son of a peasant. In early life he had toiled upon the little farm of his father. Enlisting as a common soldier, he entered the army. By valor and rigid devotion to military discipline he rose rapidly to the office of commander-in-chief of the cavalry. The Emperor Valerian had invested him with the honors of the consulship, rather pompously declaring him "the deliverer of Illiricum, the restorer of Gaul and the rival of the Scipios." Though his reign lasted less than five years, it was rendered illustrious by heroic deeds. He drove the Goths back howling to their wilderness, and recovered Gaul, Spain and Britain from the barbaric bands who had overrun those territories. By marriage with the daughter of a Roman senator of highest rank and wealth he entered upon the possession of a large private fortune.

The mind of Aurelian was of that unusual cast which enabled him to grasp the most extensive combinations, while at the same time he could superintend the most minute details of discipline. Inexorably he forbade, in the camp, all gaming and drinking. He enforced practices of frugality, modesty and industry. Their armor they were required ever to keep bright, their weapons sharp, their clothing in perfect condition, and their horses ready for instant service. He would not allow the slightest plundering while in friendly territories. Not a sheep-fold, a hen-roost or corn-field could the soldiers invade with impunity. On one occasion a soldier assailed a helpless woman with violence. The guilty man, in the presence of the whole camp, had his limbs bound to trees, forcibly bent to the ground. The cords which held the trees were then cut, and, by their rebound, his body was torn into fragments. The punishments Aurelian inflicted were terrible. It was only by such punishment that the brutal soldiery of Rome could be restrained.

Having thoroughly established his sway throughout the western portion of the empire, Aurelian turned his attention to Zenobia, the renowned Queen of Palmyra and the East, who was consolidating her empire on the banks of the Euphrates. Zenobia was one of the most extraordinary women of that or of any other age. She claimed descent from the ancient kings of Egypt, and rivalled Cleopatra in voluptuous beauty. She seems to have been singularly exempt from the peculiar vices almost universal in that age. The historians of that time have given minute details of her personal appearance. She was a brilliant brunette. Her teeth were perfectly regular and of pearly whiteness. Her large, black, lustrous eye, beamed alike with the glow of intellect and the most tender sensibility. Her voice was full of melody. In addition to all this, she was a highly accomplished woman in all literary culture. She was not only familiar with the Latin language, but spoke fluently the Greek, the Syriac, and many Egyptian tongues. For her own use she had written an epitome of universal history. The celebrated Longinus, whose works have been read and admired by scholars, in all lands, for more than a thousand years, was her tutor.

This illustrious woman, whose soul, did we hold to the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, we should say subsequently inhabited the body of Maria Theresa of Austria, gave her hand in marriage to Odenathus, who had risen from a private station to share the throne with Zenobia. But though Odenathus sat upon the same throne, Zenobia by no means equally divided with him imperial power. She was the true sovereign. She had accustomed herself to fatigue, accompanying her armies on their most perilous excursions, disdaining the luxury of a carriage, generally appearing on horseback, but frequently marching for miles on foot at the head of her troops. The death of Odenathus, by the hands of an assassin, left Zenobia a widowed queen, to meet alone the armies of indignant and avenging Rome. One Roman general who had been sent against her she had already defeated and driven back in shame to Europe. The wild romance of the conflict between Aurelian and Zenobia, must be reserved for another number.

GROUNDS OF SUCCESS.

"I have little faith," said the late William Ellery Channing, "in effects which are not founded in truth. A false theology may produce infinite excitement, but the force is soon spent. Light, light is the great power."

This remark directs our attention to the connection between a knowledge of truth and right action. This connection, though very obvious, is not seen by all.

Truth is necessary to right action in all things. A chemist wishes to make a certain chemical compound. He must know the laws of chemical combination in the case, or he cannot act rightly. Only so far as he knows the laws of chemistry, and acts in accordance with those laws, will he be successful.

A machinist wishes to construct a machine, to be worked by water or by steam. He must know the laws of mechanical forces, or he cannot construct his machine aright. Knowledge of mechanical truth is necessary to right mechanical action.

A farmer wishes to get the best possible crops from his land. He must know the nature of the soil, and the modes of culture. He must possess agricultural knowledge in order to successful action. If his views are false, if he thinks that corn is to be planted in November, and buckwheat sown when the snow is on the ground, he will not succeed.

So in regard to morals and religion. Knowledge is the condition of right action. A man must know his duty in order to do it. Sincerity in error will not change error into truth in religion any more than in chemistry. A knowledge of the truth is necessary to truthful practice. Hence the unsoundness of the maxim, "It is no matter what a man believes, if his practice be right." A man's practice cannot be what it should be, unless his belief is right.

THE INVALID'S DILEMMA.

In these days of antagonistic medical theories, the sick man, in his perplexity, may well say like the late Daniel Webster when denounced by the Whig party—"Where shall I go?" "Take calomel," says the old-fashioned Allopathist. "Try champagne," suggests the Chrono-thermalist. "Nothing like water and boiled mutton," insists the Hydropathist. "Pills the size of pins' heads, and if you want nourishing broth let the shadow of a chicken fall on a pot of boiling Croton for half an hour," whispers the Homeopathist. "Have your muscles kneaded and your joints twisted," cries the Vinesipathist. "Starve yourself," insists the advocate of the 'Hunger Cure.' "Let me spark you," says the Electrician. "Lobelia's the thing," insinuates the Thomsonian. "Scrub," exclaims the Frictionist. "Use my specific," shout a thousand charlatans. What's to be done? Who is to decide when so many doctors disagree? Bewildered and confounded the *patient* world looks timidly around, and plaintively inquires, "Where shall we go?" "What is truth?"

The best course in such a dilemma is to consult a liberal-minded, thoroughly educated physician, of strong common sense. One who observes closely, reasons upon what he sees, and suits his practice to circumstances. There are probably *some* grains of truth in most medical theories, and these such a man will winnow from the chaff, and apply as occasion may require. Medical treatment should suit the physical peculiarities and constitutional idiosyncracies of the sick. There is no invariable rule for all cases. What is one man's cure may be another's poison.

CONEY ISLAND ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOUR YEARS AGO.

Extraordinary changes occur in the course of one hundred and fifty-four years, but we have grave doubts whether the sand patch at the mouth of our harbor, known to modern Knickerbockers as Coney Island, could have been the fertile spot in 1609, that our old friend Hendrick Hudson would have us believe. While taking a whiff of salt air on its hard beach the other day, and looking over its verdureless sand-hills, we could not believe that it had ever been anything else than a bit of whity-brown desert, set in the chops of the channel for the accommodation of clams. And yet old Hendrick Hudson insists that when he landed there on the third of September, 1609, from his ship the Half-Moon, he found the island covered with plum-trees laden with fruit, and that plenty of grapes were to be had for the plucking. To these luxuries, so refreshing after a long voyage, he intimates that he was made heartily welcome by an obliging race of Indians, called Matouwacks. A pretty story—but somewhat fishy. If he had so described *Staten Island*, now, one might have credited the tale; but as to the barren realm of Coney having ever been rich in fruits, the thing is impossible.

MODERN COMFORTS.

Most of us have probably thought in our young and romantic days, that it would have been a fine thing to live in the age of chivalry, when "worlds were staked for ladies' eyes," and there were tournaments and Queens of Love and Beauty, and Knights Errant galloped about whither they listed succoring distressed damsels. But as we grow older we change our views. Seated on a spring sofa, or in an easy chair that Somnus might have patented, or reclining on a sleep seducing modern bed, what mature man does not pity the fate of his remote ancestors—fellows who lived in willow-work shanties daubed over with clay, sat on stools, had no carpets save wisps of rushes, slept on straw, and ate the hardest kind of "chums." Turning over to take another snooze on one's elastic curled-hair mattrass, one wonders how the unfortunate wretches stood it! Ah! it is a blessing to live in an era when comfort has been reduced to an exact science. To be sure rents *are* high and the taxes heavy, but what of that? Who would rather not pay them, even if they were quadrupled, than have had his lot cast in the chairless, sofaless, bedless, and altogether comfortless "Chivalric Age."

THE PUFF ROMANTIC.

In Paris, when a *feuilletonist*, or story writer, of a certain grade, has engaged to write a local story for a newspaper, he circulates an outline of it among the fashionable tradesmen of the capital, and requests them to name the sums they are willing to pay for figuring in the fiction. The result is that the hero employs the tailor who makes the best bid, and buys the pistols or sword for the inevitable single combat of the most liberal gunsmith or cutler. The bride's wedding presents are purchased of the jeweller who "does the handsome thing;" her dresses and bonnets of the mantua-makers and milliners who respond most favorably. Confectioners, wine merchants, apothecaries, and even undertakers are introduced, by name, for a consideration. Such Literature of the Shop would not pay in this country. In the first place, no *respectable* editor would publish it, and if it *were* published, the sharp-witted reading public would "smell a rat," and toss the advertising romance aside in disgust.

FLOWER-REQUIEM.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

I plant the lily and the rose,
Dear friend, upon thy blest repose!
Lily, the emblem here thou art
Of his own innocent, pure heart;
Rose, thou art symbol of the perfect love
He grew for all below, for all above:
Lilies and roses, on his tomb
Heaven an everlasting bloom!

II.

I plant the laurel, amaranth here,
Dear one, with mingling smile and tear—
The smile for all those golden hours
We knew in friendship's fragrant bowers·
The tear because that time is past,
Too beautiful for earth to last.
Laurel, thou'rt emblem of the fame
Twined evermore with his high name;
Bright amaranth, it is thine to be
Type of his immortality;
But, cypress, thou shalt never twine
About this sacred burial shrine:
He has with thee and death no cloudy part;
'Tis thine, oh solemn tree, to shade *my* heart!
Ye glowing flowers, upon his tomb
Heaven an everlasting bloom!

III.

O Sun, shed here thy softest light,
But, Tempest, never bring thy night!
And thou, O Moon, on this blest place
Look ever with selectest grace,
For Hatred's black'ning storm he never hurled,
White Peace and purplest Love made all his world!
O Nature, his own right
Compels thy tenderest light,
While loveliest flowers on his tomb
Heaven an everlasting bloom!

SELF-MADE;

OR,

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

BY MRS. E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE HIDDEN HAND," "THE LOST HEIRESS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE DREAM AND THE AWAKENING.

The lover is a god,—the ground
He treads on is not ours;
His soul by other laws is bound,
Sustained by other powers;
His own and that one other heart
Form for himself a world apart.
MILNES.

Time went on. Autumn faded into winter; the flowers were withered; the grass dried; the woods bare. Miss Merlin no longer sat under the green shadows of the old elm tree; there were no green shadows there; the tree was stripped of its leaves and seemed but the skeleton of itself, and the snow lay around its foot.

The season, far from interrupting the intimacy between the heiress and her favorite, only served to draw them even more closely together. This was the way of it. At the noon recess all the pupils of the school would rush madly out upon the lawn to engage in the rough, healthful and exciting game of snow-balling each other—all except Claudia, who was far too fine a lady to enter into any such rude sport; and Ishmael, whose attendance upon her own presence she would peremptorily demand.

While all the others were running over each other in their haste to get out, Claudia would pass into the empty drawing-room, and seating herself in the deep easy chair, would call to her "gentleman in waiting," saying:

"Come, my young troubadour, bring your guitar and sit down upon this cushion at my feet and play an accompaniment to my song, as I sing and work."

And Ishmael, filled with joy, would fly to obey the royal mandate; and soon seated at the beauty's feet, in the glow of the warm wood fire and in the glory of her heavenly presence, he would lose himself in a delicious dream of love and music. No one ever interrupted their tête-à-tête. And Ishmael grew to feel that he belonged to his liege-lady; that they were forever inseparate and inseparable. And thus his days passed in one delusive dream of bliss until the time came when he was rudely awakened.

One evening, as usual, he took leave of Claudia. It was a bitter cold evening, and she took off her own crimson Berlin wool scarf and with her own fair hands wound it around Ishmael's neck, and charged him to hasten home, because she knew that Influenza would be lying in wait to seize any loitering pedestrian that night.

Ishmael ran home, as happy as it was in the power of man to make him. How blest he felt in the possession of her scarf—her fine, soft, warm scarf, deliciously filled with the aroma of Claudia's own youth, beauty and sweetness. He felt that he was not quite separated from her while he had her scarf—her dear scarf, with the warmth and perfume of her own neck yet within its meshes! That night he only unwound it from his throat to fold it and lay it on his pillow that his cheek might rest upon it while he slept, slept the sweetest sleep that ever visited his eyes.

Ah, poor, pale sleeper! this was the last happy night he was destined to have for many weeks and months.

In the morning he arose early as usual to hasten to school and—to Claudia. He wound her gift around his neck and set off at a brisk pace. The weather was still intensely cold; but the winter sky was clear and the sunshine glittered "keen and bright" upon the crisp white snow. Ishmael hurried on and reached Brudenell Hall just in time to see a large, fur-covered sleigh, drawn by a pair of fine horses, shoot through the great gates and disappear down the forest road.

A death-like feeling, a strange spasm, as if a hand of ice had clutched his heart, caught away Ishmael's breath at the sight of that vanishing sleigh. He could not rationally account for this feeling; but soon as he recovered his breath he inquired of old Jovial, who was standing near and gazing after the sleigh:

"Who has gone away?"

"Miss Claudia, sir; her 'pa came after her last night——"

"Claudia—gone!" echoed Ishmael, reeling and supporting himself against the trunk of the bare old elm tree.

"It was most unexpected, sir; mist'ess sat up most all night to see to the packing of her clothes——"

"Gone—gone—Claudia gone!" breathed Ishmael, in a voice despairing, yet so low, that it did not interrupt the easy flow of Jovial's narrative.

"But you see, sir, the judge, he said how he hadn't a day to lose, 'cause he'd have to be at Annapolis to-morrow to open his court——"

"Gone—gone," wailed Ishmael, dropping his arms.

"And 'pears the judge *did* write to warn master and mist'ess to get Miss Claudia ready to go this morning; but seems like they never got the letter——"

"*Oh! gone!*" moaned Ishmael.

——"Anyways, it was all—'quick! march!' and away they went. And the word *does* go around as, after the court term is over, the judge he means to take Miss Claudia over the seas to forrin parts to see the world."

"Which—which road did they take, Jovial?" gasped Ishmael, striving hard to recover breath and strength and the power of motion.

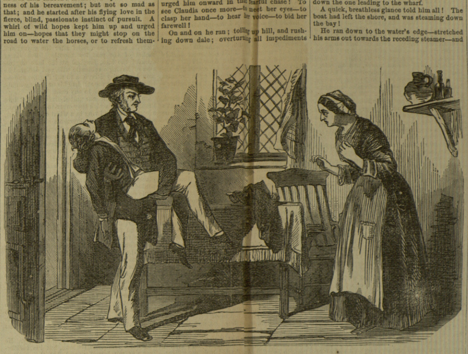
"Law, sir, the Baymouth road, to be sure! where they 'spects to take the 'Napolis boat, which it 'ill be a nigh thing if they get there in time to meet it, dough dey has taken the sleigh an' the fast horses."

Ishmael heard no more. Dropping his books, he darted out of the gate, and fled along the road taken by the travellers. Was it in the mad hope of overtaking the sleigh? As well might he expect to overtake an express train! No—he was mad indeed! maddened by the suddenness of his bereavement; but not so mad as that; and he started after his flying love in the fierce, blind, passionate instinct of pursuit. A whirl of wild hopes kept him up and urged him on—hopes that they might stop on the road to water the horses, or to refresh themselves, or that they might be delayed at the toll-gate to make change, or that some other possible or impossible thing might happen to stop their journey long enough for him to overtake them and see Claudia once more; to shake hands with her, bid her good-bye, and receive from her at parting some last word of regard—some last token of remembrance! This was now the only object of his life; this was what urged him onward in that fearful chase! To see Claudia once more—to meet her eyes—to clasp her hand—to hear her voice—to bid her farewell!

On and on he ran; toiling up hill, and rushing down dale; overturning all impediments that lay in his way; startling all the foot-passengers with the fear of an escaped maniac! On and on he sped in his mad flight, until he reached the outskirts of the village. There a sharp pang and a sudden faintness obliged him to stop and rest, grudging the few moments required for the recovery of his breath. Then he set off again, and ran all the way into the village—ran down the principal street, and turned down the one leading to the wharf.

A quick, breathless glance told him all! The boat had left the shore, and was steaming down the bay!

He ran down to the water's edge—stretched his arms out towards the receding steamer—and with an agonizing cry of "Claudia! Claudia!" fell forward upon his face in a deep swoon.



HANNAH WORTH RECEIVES A SHOCK.

A crowd of villagers gathered around him.

"Who is he?"

"What is the matter with him?"

"Is he ill?"

"Has he fainted?"

"Has he been hurt?"

"Has an accident happened?"

"Is there a doctor to be had?"

All these questions were asked in the same breath by the various individuals of the crowd that had collected around the insensible boy; but none seemed ready with an answer.

"Is there *no* one here who can tell who he is?" inquired a tall, gray-haired, mild looking man, stooping to raise the prostrate form.

"Yes—it is Ishmael Worth!" answered Hamlin, the bookseller, who was a new-comer upon the scene.

"Ishmael Worth? Hannah Worth's nephew?"

"Yes—that is who he is."

"Then stand out of the way, friends; I will take charge of the lad," said the gray-haired stranger, lifting the form of the boy in his arms, and gazing into his face.

"He is not hurt; he is only in a dead faint, and I had better take him home at once," continued the old man, as he carried his burden to a light wagon that stood in the street in charge of a negro, and laid him carefully on the cushions. Then he got in himself, and took the boy's head upon his knees, and directed the negro to drive gently along the road leading to the weaver's. And with what infinite tenderness the stranger supported the light form; with what wistful interest he contemplated the livid young face. And so at an easy pace they reached the hill hut.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

DARKNESS.

With such wrong and woe exhausted, what I suffered and occasioned—
As a wild horse, through a city, runs, with lightning in his eyes,
And then dashing at a church's cold and passive wall impassioned,
Strikes the death into his burning brain, and blindly drops and dies—
So I fell struck down before her! Do you blame me, friends, for weakness?
'Twas my strength of passion slew me!—fell before her like a stone;
Fast the dreadful world rolled from me, on its roaring wheels of blackness!
When the light came, I was lying in this chamber—and alone.
E. B. BROWNING.

Hannah Worth was sitting over her great wood fire and busily engaged in needlework, when the door was gently pushed open and the gray-haired man entered, bearing the boy in his arms.

Hannah looked calmly up, then threw down her work and started from her chair, exclaiming:

"Reuben Gray! you back again! you! and—who have you got there?—Ishmael? Good Heavens! what has happened to the poor boy?"

"Nothing to frighten you, Hannah, my dear; he has fainted, I think, that is all," answered Reuben gently, as he laid the boy carefully upon the bed.

"But, oh, my goodness, Reuben, how did it happen? where did you find him?" cried Hannah, frantically seizing first one hand and then the other of the fainting boy, and clapping and rubbing them vigorously.

"I picked him up on the Baymouth wharf about half an hour ago, Hannah, my dear, and——"

"The Baymouth wharf! that is out of all reason! Why it is not more than two hours since he started to go to Brudenell Hall," exclaimed Hannah, as she violently rubbed away at the boy's hands.

Reuben was standing patiently at the foot of the bed, with his hat in his hands, and he answered slowly:

"Well, Hannah, I don't know how that might be; but I know I picked him up where I said."

"But what caused all this, Reuben Gray? What caused it? that's what I wan't to know! can't you speak?" harshly demanded the woman, as she flew to her cupboard, seized a vinegar cruet, and began to bathe Ishmael's head and face with its stimulating contents.

"Well, Hannah, I couldn't tell exactly; but 'pears to me some one went off in the boat as he was a-pining after."

"*Who* went off in the boat?" asked Hannah, impatiently.

"Law, Hannah, my dear, how could I tell? Why, there wasn't less than thirty or forty passengers, more or less, went off in that boat!"

"What do I care how many restless fools went off in the boat? Tell me about the boy!" snapped Hannah, as she once more ran to the cupboard, poured out a little precious brandy (kept for medicinal purposes) and came and tried to force a teaspoonful between Ishmael's lips.

"Hannah, woman, don be so unpatient. Indeed it wasn't *my* fault. I will tell you all I know about it."

"Tell me, then."

"I'm going to. Well, you see, I had just taken some of the judge's baggage down to the boat and got it well on, as the boat had just started, and I was just a-getting into my cart again, when I seen a youth come a-tearin' down the street like mad, and he whips round the corner like a rush of wind and streaks it down to the wharf and looks after the boat as if it was a-carrying off every friend he had upon the yeth; and then he stretches out both his arms and cries out aloud, and falls on his face like a tree cut down. And a crowd gathered, and some one said how the lad was your nephew, so I picked him up and laid him in my cart to bring him home. And I made Bob drive slow; and I bathed the boy's face and *hands with some* good whiskey, and tried to *make him swaller* some; but it was no use."

While Reuben spoke, Ishmael gave signs of returning consciousness, and then suddenly opened his eyes and looked around him.

"Drink this, my boy; drink this, my darling Ishmael," said Hannah, raising his head with one hand while she held the brandy to his lips with the other.

Ishmael obediently drank a little and then sank back upon his pillow. He gazed fixedly at Hannah for a few moments, and then he suddenly threw his arms around her neck, as she stooped over him, and cried out in a voice piercing shrill with anguish:

"Oh, Aunt Hannah! she is gone; she is gone forever!"

"Who is gone, my boy?" asked Hannah, sympathetically.

"Claudia! Claudia!" he wailed, covering his convulsed face with his hands.

"Now, my ban upon Brudenell Hall and all connected with it!" exclaimed Hannah, bitterly, as the hitherto unsuspected fact of Ishmael's fatal love flashed upon her mind—"my blackest ban upon Brudenell Hall and all its hateful race! It was built for the ruin of me and mine! I was a fool! a weak, wicked fool, ever to have allowed Ishmael to enter its unlucky doors! My curse upon them!"

The boy threw up his thin hand with a gesture of deprecation.

"Don't! don't! don't, Aunt Hannah! Every word you speak is a stab through my heart." And the sentence closed with a gasp and a sob, and he covered his face with his hands.

"What *can* I do for him?" said Hannah, appealing to Reuben.

"Nothing, my dear, but what you have done. Leave him alone to rest quietly. It is easy to see that he has been very much shaken both in body and mind; and perfect rest is the only thing as will help him," answered Grey.

Ishmael's hands covered his quivering face; but they saw that his bosom was heaving convulsively. He seemed to be struggling valiantly to regain composure. Presently, as if ashamed of having betrayed his weakness, he uncovered his face and said, in a faltering and interrupted voice:

"Dear Aunt Hannah, I am so sorry that I have disturbed you; excuse me; and let me lie here for half-an-hour to recover myself. I do not wish to be self-indulgent; but I am exhausted. I ran all the way from Brudenell Hall to Baymouth to get—to see—to see——" His voice broke down with a sob, he covered his face with his hands, and shook as with an ague.

"Never mind, my dear, don't try to explain; lie as long as you wish, and sleep if you can," said Hannah.

But Ishmael looked up again, and with recovered calmness, said:

"I will rest for half-an-hour, Aunt Hannah, no longer; and then I will get up and cut the wood, or do any work you want done."

"Very well, my boy," said Hannah, stooping and kissing him. Then she arranged his pillow, covered him up carefully, drew the curtains and came away and left him.

"He will be all right in a little while, Hannah, my dear," said Reuben, as he walked with her towards the fireplace.

"Sit down there, Reuben, and tell me about yourself, and where you have been living all this time," said Hannah, seating herself in her arm-chair and pointing to another.

Reuben slowly took the seat, and carefully deposited his hat on the floor by his side.

"I am sorry I spoke so sharply to you about the lad, Reuben; it was a thankless return for all your kindness in taking care of him, and bringing him home; but indeed I am not thankless, Reuben; but I have grown to be a very cross old woman," she said.

"Have you, indeed, Hannah, my dear?" exclaimed Reuben, raising his eyebrows in sincere astonishment and some consternation.

"It appears to me that you might see that I have," replied Hannah, plainly.

"Well, no; seems to me, my dear, you're the same as you allers was, both as to looks and as to temper."

"I feel that I am very much changed. And so are *you*, Reuben! How gray your hair is!" she said, looking critically at her old admirer.

"Gray! I believe you! Aint it, though?" exclaimed Reuben, smiling, and running his horny fingers through his blanched locks.

"But you haven't told me all about yourself, yet; where you have been living; how you have been getting along, and what brought you back to this part of the country," said Hannah, with an air of deep interest.

"Why Hannah, my dear, didn't you know all how and about it?"

"No; I heard long ago, of course, that you had got a place as overseer on the plantation of some rich gentleman up in the forest; but that was all; I never even heard the name of the place or the master."

"Well, now, that beats all! Why, Hannah, woman, as soon as I got settled, I set down and writ you a letter, and all how and about it, and axed you, if ever you changed your mind about what—about the—about our affairs, you know—to drop me a line and I'd come and marry you and the child, right out of hand, and fetch you both to my new home."

"I never got the letter."

"See that, now! Everything, even the post, goes to cross a feller's love! But Hannah, woman, if you *had* a got the letter, would you a called me back?" asked Gray, eagerly.

"No, Reuben, certainly not," said Hannah, decidedly.

"Then it is just as well you didn't get it," sighed this most faithful though most unfortunate of suitors.

"Yes; just as well, Reuben;" assented Hannah; "but that fact does not lessen my interest in your fortunes, and as I never got the letter I am still ignorant of your circumstances."

"Well, Hannah, my dear, I'm thankful as you feel any interest in me at all; and I'll tell you everything. Let me see, what was it you was wanting to know, now? all about myself; where I was living; how I was getting along; and what fotch me back here;—all soon told, Hannah, my dear!—First about myself: You see, Hannah, that day as you slammed the door in my face, I felt so distressed in my mind as I didn't care what on earth became of me; first I thought I'd 'list for a soldier; then I thought I'd ship for a sailor; last I thought I'd go and seek my fortin' in Californy; but then the idee of the girls having of no protector but myself, hindered of me; hows'ever anyways I made up my mind, as come what would I'd leave the neighborhood, first opportunity; and so, soon after, as I heard of a situation as overseer at Judge Merlin's plantation up in the forest of Prince George's County, I sets off and walks up there, and offers myself for the place; and was so fort'nate as to be taken; so I comes back and moves my family, bag and baggage, up there.—Now as to the place where I live, it is called Tanglewood, and a tangle it is, as gets more and more tangled every year of its life.—As to how I'm getting on, Hannah, I can't complain; for if I have to do hard very hard work, I get very good wages. As to what brought me back to the neighborhood, Hannah, it was to do some business for the judge, and to buy some stock for the farm. But there, my dear! that boy has slipped out, and is cutting the wood; I'll go and do it for him," said Reuben, as the sound of Ishmael's axe fell upon their ears.

Hannah arose and followed Gray to the door, and there before it stood Ishmael, chopping away, at random, upon the pile of wood, his cheeks flushed with fever and his eyes wild with excitement.

"Hannah, he is ill; he is very ill; see, he doesn't well know what he is about," said Reuben, trying to take the axe from the boy's hand.

"Ishmael, Ishmael, my lad, come in; you are not well enough to work," said Hannah, anxiously.

Ishmael yielded up the axe and suffered Reuben to draw him into the house.

"It is only that I am so hot and dizzy and weak, Mr. Middleton; but I am sure I shall be able to do it presently," said Ishmael, apologetically, as he put his hand to his head and looked around himself in perplexity.

"I'll tell you what, the boy is out of his head, Hannah, and it's my belief as he's a going to have a bad illness," said Reuben, as he guided Ishmael to the bed and laid him on it.

"Oh, Reuben! what shall we do?" exclaimed Hannah.

"I don't know, child! wait a bit and see."

They had not long to wait; in a few hours Ishmael was burning with fever and raving with delirium.

"This is a gwine to be a bad job! I'll go and fetch a doctor," said Reuben Gray, hurrying away for the purpose.

Reuben's words proved true. It *was* a "bad job." Severe study, mental excitement, disappointment and distress had done their work upon his extremely sensitive organization, and Ishmael was prostrated by illness.

We will not linger over the gloomy days that followed. The village doctor brought by Reuben was as skilful as if he had been the fashionable physician of a large city, and as attentive as if his poor young patient had been a millionaire. Hannah devoted herself with almost motherly love to the suffering boy; and Reuben remained in the neighborhood and came every day to fetch and carry, chop wood and bring water and help Hannah to nurse Ishmael. And Hannah was absolutely reduced to the necessity of accepting his affectionate services. Mr. Middleton, as soon as he heard of his favorite's illness, hurried to the hut to inquire into Ishmael's condition and to offer every assistance in his power to render; and he repeated his visits as often as the great pressure of his affairs permitted him to do. Ishmael's illness was long protracted; Mr. Middleton's orders to vacate Brudenell Hall on or before the first day of February were peremptory; and thus it followed that the whole family removed from the neighborhood before Ishmael was in a condition to bid them farewell.

The day previous to their departure, however, Mr. and Mrs. Middleton, with Walter and Beatrice, came to take leave of him. As Mrs. Middleton stooped over the unconscious youth, her tears fell fast and warm upon his face, so that in his fever dream he murmured:

"Claudia, it is beginning to rain, let us go in."

At this Beatrice burst into a flood of tears and was led away to the carriage by her father.

After the departure of the Middletons it was currently reported in the neighborhood that the arrival of Mr. Herman Brudenell was daily expected. Hannah became very much disturbed with an anxiety that was all the more wearing because she could not communicate it to any one. The idea of remaining in the neighborhood with Mr. Brudenell, and being subjected to the chance of meeting him, was unsupportable to her; she would have been glad of any happy event that might take her off to a distant part of the State, and she resolved, in the event of poor Ishmael's death, to go and seek a home and service somewhere else. Reuben Gray staid on; and in answer to all Hannah's remonstrances, he said:

"It is of no use talking to me now, Hannah! You can't do without me, woman; and I mean to stop until the poor lad gets well or dies."

But our boy was not doomed to die; the indestructible vitality, the irrepressible elasticity of his delicate and sensitive organization, bore him through and above his terrible illness, and he passed the crisis safely and lived. After that turning point his recovery was rapid. It was a mild, dry mid-day in early spring that Ishmael walked out for the first time. He bent his steps to the old oak tree that overshadowed his mother's grave, and seated himself there to enjoy the fresh air while he reflected.

Ishmael took himself severely to task for what he called the blindness, the weakness and the folly with which he had permitted himself to fall into a hopeless, mad and nearly fatal passion, for one placed so high above him that indeed he might as well have loved some "bright particular star," and hoped to win it. And here on the sacred turf of his mother's grave he resolved once for all to conquer this boyish passion, by devoting himself to the serious business of life.

Hannah and Reuben were left alone in the hut.

"Now, Reuben Gray," began Hannah, "no tongue can tell how much I feel your goodness to me and Ishmael; but, my good man, you mustn't stay in this neighborhood any longer; Ishmael is well and does not need you; and your employer's affairs are neglected and do need you. So, Reuben, my friend, you had better start home as soon as possible."

"Well, Hannah, my dear, I think so too, and I have thought so for the last week, only I did not like to hurry you," said Reuben, acquiescently.

"Didn't like to hurry *me*, Reuben? *how* hurry me? I don't know what you mean," said Hannah, raising her eyes in astonishment.

"Why, I didn't know as you'd like to get ready so soon; or, indeed, whether the lad was able to bear the journey yet," said Reuben, calmly and reflectively.

"Reuben, I haven't the least idea of your meaning."

"Why, law, Hannah, my dear, it seems to me it is plain enough; no woman likes to be hurried at sich times, and I thought you would'nt like to be neither; I thought you would like a little time to get up some little finery; and also the boy would be the better for more rest before taking of a long journey; but how'sever, Hannah, if you don't think all these delays necessary, why I wouldn't be the man to be a making of them. Because, to tell you the truth, considering the shortness of life, I think the delays have been long enough; and considering our age, I think we have precious little time to lose. I'm fifty-one years of age, Hannah; and you be getting on smart towards forty-four; and if we ever mean to marry in *this* world, I think it is about time, my dear."

"Reuben Gray, is *that* what you mean?"

"Sartain, Hannah! You didn't think as I was agoing away *again* without you, did you now?"

"And so *that* was what you meant, was it?"

"That was what I *meant*, and that was what I still *mean*, Hannah, my dear."

"Then you must be a natural fool!" burst forth Hannah.

"Now stop o' that, my dear! 'taint a bit of use! all them hard words might o' fooled me years and years agone, when you kept me at such a distance that I had no chance of reading of your natur'; but they can't fool me *now*, as I have been six weeks in constant sarvice here, Hannah, and obsarving of you close. *Once* they might have made me think you hated me; but *now* nothing you can say will make me believe but what you like old Reuben to-day just as well as you liked young Reuben that day we first fell in love long o' one another at the harvest home. And as for *me*, Hannah, the Lord knows I have never changed towards you. We *always* liked each other, Hannah, and we like each other *still*. So don't try to deceive yourself about it, for you can't deceive *me!*"

"Reuben Gray, why do you talk so to me?"

"Because it is right, dear."

"I gave you your answer years ago."

"I know you did, Hannah; because there was sartain carcumstances, as you chose to elevate into obstacles against our marriage; but now, Hannah, all these obstacles are removed. Nancy and Peggy married and went out to Texas years ago. And little Kitty married and left me last summer. She and her husband have gone to Californy; where, they do tell me, that lumps of pure gold lay about the ground as plenty as stones do down around here. Anyways, they've all gone! all the little sisters as I have worked for, and cared for, and saved for—all gone, and left me alone in my old age."

"That was very ungrateful, and selfish, and cruel of them, Reuben! They should have taken you with them! At least little Kitty and her husband should have done so," said Hannah, with more feeling than she had yet betrayed.

"Law, Hannah, why, little Kitty and her husband couldn't! Why, child, it takes mints and mints of money to pay for a passage out yonder to Californy! and it takes nine months to go the v'yge—they have to go all around Cape—Cape Hoof, no, Horn—Cape Horn! I knowed it wor somethin' relating to cattle. Yes, Hannah—hundreds of dollars and months of time do it take to go to that gold region! and so, 'stead o' them being able to take *me* out, I had to gather up all my savings to help 'em to pay their own passage."

"Poor Reuben! Poor, poor Reuben!" said Hannah, with the tears springing to her eyes.

"Thank you, thank you, dear; but I shall not be poor Reuben if *you* will be mine," whispered Gray.

"Reuben, dear, I would—indeed I would—if I were still young and good-looking; but I am not so, dear Reuben; I am middle-aged and plain."

"Well, Hannah, old sweetheart, while you have been growing older, have I been going back'ards and growing younger? One would think so to hear you talk. No, Hannah! I think there is just about the same difference in our ages now as there was years ago; and besides, if you were young and handsome, Hannah, I would never do you such a wrong as to ask you to be the wife of a poor old man like me! It is the fitness of our ages and sarcumstances, as well as our long attachment, that gives me the courage to ask you even at this late day, old friend, to come and cheer my lonely home. Will you do so, Hannah?"

"Reuben, do you really think that I could make you any happier than you are, or make your home any more comfortable than it is?" asked Hannah, in a low, doubting voice.

"Sartain, my dear."

"But, Reuben, I am not good-tempered like I used to be; I am very often cross; and——"

"That is because you have been all alone, with no one to care for you, Hannah, my dear. You *could'nt* be cross, with me to love you," said Reuben, soothingly.

"But, indeed, I fear I should; it is my infirmity; I am cross even with Ishmael, poor dear lad."

"Well, Hannah, even if you was to be, I shouldn't mind it much. I don't want to boast, but I *do* hope as I've got too much manhood to be out of patience with women; besides, I aint easy put out, you know."

"No, you good fellow; I never saw you out of temper in my life."

"Thank you, Hannah! Then it's a bargain?"

"But, Reuben! about Ishmael?"

"Lord bless you, Hannah! why, I told you years ago, when the lad was a helpless baby, that he should be as welcome to me as a son of my own; and now, Hannah, at his age, with his larnin', he'll be a perfect treasure to me," said Reuben, brightening up.

"In what manner, Reuben?"

"Why, law, Hannah, you know I never could make any fist of reading, writing and 'rithmetic; and so the keeping of the farm-books is just the one great torment of my life. Little Kitty used to keep them for me before she was married, (you know I managed to give the child a bit of schooling); but since she have been gone they haven't been half kept, and if I hadn't a good memory of my own I shouldn't be able to give no account of nothing. Now, Ishmael, you know, could put all the books to rights for me and keep them to rights."

"If that be so, it will relieve my mind very much, Reuben," replied Hannah.

The appearance of Ishmael's pale face at the door put an end to the conversation for the time being. And Reuben took up his hat and departed.

That evening, after Reuben had bid them good night, and departed to the neighbor's house where he slept, Hannah told Ishmael all about her engagement to Gray. And it was with the utmost astonishment the youth learned they were all to go to reside on the plantation of Judge Merlin—Claudia's father! Well! to live so near her house would make his duty to conquer his passion only the more difficult, but he was still resolved to effect his purpose.

Having once given her consent, Hannah would not compromise Reuben's interest with his employer by making any more difficulties or delays. She spent the remainder of that week in packing up the few effects belonging to herself and Ishmael. The boy himself employed his time in transplanting rose-bushes from the cottage-garden to his mother's grave, and fencing it around with a rude but substantial paling. On Sunday morning Reuben and Hannah were married at the church; and on Monday they were to set out for their new home.

Early on Monday morning Ishmael arose and went out to take leave of his mother's grave; and kneeling there, he silently renewed his vow to rescue her name from reproach and give it to honor.

Then he returned and joined the travelling party.

Before the cottage door stood Reuben's light wagon, in which were packed the trunks with their wearing apparel, the hamper with their luncheon, and all the little light effects which required care. Into this Gray placed Hannah and Ishmael, taking the driver's seat himself. A heavier wagon behind this one contained all Hannah's household furniture, including her loom and wheel and Ishmael's home-made desk and book-shelf, and in the driver's seat sat the negro man who had come down in attendance upon the overseer.

The Professor of Odd Jobs stood in the door of the hut, with his hat in his hand, waving adieu to the departing travellers. The professor had come by appointment to see them off and take the key of the hut to the overseer at the Hall.

The sun was just rising above the heights of Brudenell Hall and flooding all the vale with light. The season was very forward, and, although the month was March, the weather was like that of April. The sky was of that clear, soft, bright blue of early spring; the sun shone with dazzling splendor; the new grass was springing everywhere, and was enamelled with early violets and snow-drops; the woods were budding with the tender green of young vegetation. Distant, sunny hills, covered with apple or peach orchards all in blossom, looked liked vast gardens of mammoth red and white rose-trees.

Even to the aged, spring brings renewal of life; but to the young—not even poets have words at command to tell what exhilaration, what extatic rapture, it brings to the young, who are also sensitive and sympathetic.

Ishmael was all these; his delicate organization was susceptible of intense enjoyment or suffering. He had never in his life been five miles from his native place; he had just risen from a sick bed as from a grave; he was going to penetrate a little beyond his native round of hills, and see what was on the other side; the morning was young, the season was early, the world was fresh; this day seemed a new birth to Ishmael; this journey a new start in life; he intensely enjoyed it all; to him all was delightful;—the ride through the beautiful, green, blossoming woods; the glimpses of the blue sky through the quivering upper leaves; the shining of the sun; the singing of the birds; the fragrance of the flowers!

To him the waving trees seemed bending in worship, the birds trilling hymns of joy; and the flowers wafting offerings of incense! There are times and places when this earth seems Heaven and all nature worshippers. Ishmael was divinely happy; even the lost image of Claudia reappeared now surrounded with a halo of hope, for to-day aspirations indeed seemed prophecies, will seemed power, and all things possible. And not on Ishmael alone beamed the blessed influence of the spring weather. Even Hannah's care-worn face was softened into contentment and enjoyment. As for Reuben's honest phiz, it was a sight to behold in its perfect satisfaction. Even the negro driver of the heavy wagon let his horses take their time as he raised his ear to catch some very delicate trill in a bird's song, or turned his head to inhale the perfume from some bank of flowers.

Onward they journeyed at their leisure through all that glad morning landscape.

At noon they stopped at a clearing around a cool spring in the woods, and while the negro fed and watered the horses, they rested and refreshed themselves with a substantial luncheon, and then strolled about through the shades until "Sam" had eaten his dinner, re-packed the hamper, and put the horses to the wagons again. And then they all returned to their seats and recommenced their journey.

On and on they journeyed through the afternoon; deeper and deeper they descended into the forest as the sun declined in the West. When it was on the edge of the horizon, striking long golden lines through the interstices of the woods, Hannah grew rather anxious, and she spoke up:

"It seems to me, Reuben, that we have come ten miles since we saw a house or a farm."

"Yes, my dear. We are now in the midst of the old forest of Prince George's, and our home is yet about five miles off. But don't be afraid, Hannah, woman; you have got me with you, and we will get home before midnight."

"I am only thinking of the runaway negroes, Reuben; they all take refuge in these thick woods, you know; and they are a very desperate gang; their hands against everybody and everybody's hands against them, you may say."

"True, Hannah; they are desperate enough, for they have everything to fear and nothing to hope, in a meeting with most of the whites; but there is no danger to us, child."

"I don't know; they murdered a harmless peddler last winter, and attacked a peaceable teamster this spring."

"Still, my dear, there is no danger; we have a pair of double-barrelled pistols loaded, and also a blunderbuss; and we are three men, and you are as good as a fourth; so don't be afraid."

Hannah was silenced, if not reassured.

They journeyed on at a rate as fast as the rather tired horses could be urged to make. When the sun had set it grew dark, very dark in the forest. There was no moon; and although it was a clear, star-light night, yet that did not help them much. They had to drive very slowly and carefully to avoid accidents, and it was indeed midnight when they drove up to the door of Hannah's new home. It was too dark to see more of it than that it was a two-storied white cottage with a vine-clad porch, and that it stood in a garden on the edge of the wood.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

MY CONVERT.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

When I was about fifteen years old my Aunt Platt came to pay us a visit. I had never seen her before, and as the sister of the dear father I scarcely remembered, I had felt for her the deepest reverence, and a sort of longing affection like that with which I often thought of him whom I should never see on earth.

Until she came, our little cottage home had seemed a very Paradise. I thought nothing could be more beautiful, and so far I was right. But to me there seemed an entire completeness in it, nothing was wanting to make it a perfect home. Still, from the hour she entered it, all this was changed. I came home from school and found her there, for her visit was unexpected. My mother's half-frightened air and evident discomposure as she met me at the door, had prepared me for something unpleasant. When I entered the parlor and saw there the stately lady, who, with her grand air and ample shining drapery, seemed to fill the small apartment, something of the same feeling of annoyance took possession of me. It was as if we were overshadowed in our own home.

As for that home, its whole atmosphere was changed from that hour. I came to like Aunt Platt, for she was bent on winning my love, and was very kind to me. I could not then detect the selfish motives that animated her. In my innocence I believed all that I heard, and had no suspicion. Aunt Platt talked of my "sweet simplicity" until I became almost ashamed of it, and felt that to be simple and trusting was almost a crime. In that brief visit of hers, I gained new standards of comparison, new ideas of life and its uses, and learned to be discontented with my home, and to despise the modest competence that had before seemed wealth to me. My mother was never happy from that hour.

Full soon we learned the cause of Aunt Platt's visit. A sister of her deceased husband had lived with her during her widowhood. She had treated her as a daughter, expected to make her her heir; but (this was her mode of narrating the facts) the girl had been wilful, perverse and ungrateful. She had not appreciated her advantages. Her tastes had been low. She had every opportunity for making a grand match, but she had turned from all the lovers who surrounded her, and married a penniless man of no position, a mere clerk or book-keeper.

Aunt Platt averred that she did not know what had become of her. She supposed he had gone to live with "his" people, if he had any, referring to the book-keeper. She wrote that she was a lonely old woman, and must have some young person to live with her. Would I come? could my mother spare me? If so, I should be installed into the position and privileges that Anne Platt had so ungratefully given up.

I was wild to go. But when I saw the grief of my mother, a conflict took place between my wishes and my duty. Could I desert that dear mother, already bereaved of all but me, and for the sake of the splendors of Aunt Platt's home leave her to sad solitude? I was not base enough for that, so, though with much unexpressed reluctance, I declined Aunt Platt's offers, alleging that it was impossible to leave my mother.

I wish I could have yielded up my brilliant prospects with a heartier will and a better grace. I was a little cold and sullen, but tried to do my duty well, if not lovingly. Had I known the sorrow already impending above me, the dark grief in whose shadow I already dwelt, I am sure it would have been different. Afterward I knew that my mother had written to Aunt Platt, imparting to her a knowledge of the dangerous illness that was already sapping her strength, and delaying, not refusing, for me the acceptance of her offers. So I remained at home, and when the dread knowledge came, as it did too soon, that I was soon to be motherless, I did become all that a daughter should to a dying parent. I am glad that this is true.

Before I was seventeen I was motherless. The old cottage home was inhabited by strangers, and I, in my deep mourning garments, sat sad and solitary in the splendid apartments of Aunt Platt's town mansion. I did not enter society until I had been a year with Aunt Platt. The intervening period was spent in erecting a superstructure of accomplishments upon the solid basis of education acquired beneath my mother's superintendence.

I liked society, liked the adulation I received, and the prestige of an heiress which Aunt Platt's declared intentions threw around me. No one could be gayer than I, for though I did not forget my mother, yet her memory was sweet, and hallowed, and pleasant to me, and, like my old home and once happy associations, seemed, now, to belong to a past that was never to be recalled.

Year after year I followed the giddy round of amusement and folly. In winter parties and balls, the opera and concerts, a constant succession of festivities occupied my time. In summer we went to the watering places, and repeated there the same dissipations. One year we spent in Europe; even there devoting ourselves to gayety. It was an exciting, but most unsatisfying life. As the years rolled on I sometimes found myself sighing for the green quiet and sweet peacefulness of my cottage home, and the days which I thought could never return, when simple pleasures sufficed me, and my mother's smile was more to me than the whole world's approval. I often urged Aunt Platt to spend one summer with me at the cottage. But though past sixty, she still clung to the world and its pleasures, and could not be persuaded to lose any chance of gayety that yet remained to her. And so the chains of habit closed around me, and I gradually hardened into a mere devotee of fashion, acknowledging no laws and caring for no triumph but hers.

It was a hollow, heartless life, and the only influence which served to prevent me from being utterly given over to it was that of Mrs. Dana, once Anne Platt. Two or three years after I came to live with Aunt Platt, I had, by accident, made the acquaintance of Mrs. Dana, whom I found to be a very different person from what my aunt had represented her. Calm, cheerful, sensible, well-informed and energetic—not the wilful, indolent vixen without sense or principle, I had supposed her to be, drawing her character from Aunt Platt's spiteful descriptions—I found in her much that attracted me. I liked her husband, too, and grew attached to her children, so that, after a time, her quiet, almost humble home seemed a sort of refuge to me whenever any unusual fit of disgust with the world and my life led me to seek it.

Nevertheless I was wont to turn my back upon that fair picture of household contentment, and quiet happiness, with a most dissatisfied feeling. I acknowledged its beauty, and felt that it was pleasant, and yet I had a shuddering disrelish for the small details of such narrow housekeeping, and the watchful economy which preserved at once comfort and the externals of genteel life amidst such contracted means. I had no idea of sacrificing myself, as Anne Platt had done, though George was a man who would have adorned any station, and a truer gentleman by far than many I knew were classed as eligibles in my own circle.

So I would return again to my own pursuits, more conscious of their hollowness as I contrasted them with the real joy and the genuine pleasures of that little household; but with a firmer grasp upon the splendors I dreaded to lose.

I might have married—for I was neither ugly nor disagreeable, and, above all, I was an heiress. But no fopling ever bowed before my shrine, but, in contrast with the luxurious life he offered me, arose a vision of that humble home where love dwelt, and compensated two true hearts for the splendors of a palace. And so the years passed on, and, in spite of Aunt Platt's querulous complaints, and feeble surprises, and spiteful comments on my increasing years, I still remained single and paced the giddy rounds.

In vain did my aunt lay aside her usual fretfulness (the mood reserved for home, to compensate for the enforced smiles and civilities of society) and talk to me seriously, and even kindly, of my coming loneliness. Clinging still to her ancient gayeties, she knew that her life was drawing to a close, and that ere long I must be utterly alone. But though I listened, and even acknowledged the full force of all she said, I could not conquer my repugnance to the thought of a marriage of mere convenience. That much I had learned from the household influence of the Danas—that marriage was something more than a mere bargain, or an arrangement based upon calculations of advantages.

I meant to marry within my own sphere, as I phrased it; but I intended, at the same time, to marry for love. I did not see why there might not be love in a five story marble front mansion on —— Avenue, as well as in a two-story brick house in a forgotten down-town street. I meant to realize the first, and the time came when I believed I was about to do so.

Harry Vandeleur made his appearance in our circle. His age was about the same as my own; but when at twenty, full five years ago, he had been one winter in society, he was a mere unformed boy, clever but crude, whom I had scorned from my own womanly heights as quite beneath my notice. But in foreign study, and society, and travel, he had so changed and matured, during the years in which I had led so frivolous a life, that he was now in all respects far above me. At least, with true love's wonderful abasement, I now thought so, and for the first time in my life was surprised by attentions, and overwhelmed by the condescension of an offer.

I accepted my happiness as one in a dream. I feared to wake and find it all unreal. Nothing, not even Aunt Platt's enthusiastic delight, seemed genuine. It seemed so strange to have any one to care for me, simply for me; I had never known real love and affection since my mother died.

I was so grateful for this love, so proud of Harry's intellectual superiority, that I never attempted to analyze his character. I was content to believe him greatly my superior, and had not a doubt of our future happiness.

And so we were married amidst the congratulations of our friends. "You must try and win your husband to love home, Louise," said Anne Dana to me, and that was the only word which reached my ear that could have been construed into a warning. Nor did I so accept it. Harry had been so constant in his attendance upon me during our engagement, that it did not once occur to me that he would ever be less inclined to linger by my side.

I knew that Harry liked society; but, as I had the same tastes, there surely could be no jar upon that point. Nor, for a long time, was there. Our bridal tour was a lengthened one, and when we returned home there was a constant succession of festivities in our honor, which lasted until the season was so far advanced that we determined to remove to the Grove, Mr. Vandeleur's place upon the Hudson.

The Grove had not been inhabited since the death of Harry's father, some years previously. But it had been refitted and refurnished just previous to our marriage, and was now in all respects one of the completest and most charming of grand country places.

We soon had the house filled with company. For my own part, I should have been glad to settle down to quietness and the enjoyment of Harry's society as a relief after the gayety and racket of the past few months. But Harry scouted the idea, laughed at the bare suggestion of having a romantic wife, and declared he would not play Strephon to my Phyllis, and so triumphed over me and had his way, as no doubt he would have done in any case.

In a little time our united lives settled into the grooves in which they were to run for many a year. Always living in a whirl of excitement, with our separate employments and sources of amusement filling up all the hours not spent in public, we could hardly have been said to have any home life. But Mr. Vandeleur did not live for society alone. Fond as he was of it, he had greater ambitions than it could satisfy. He became interested in politics, and the force of his character and talents soon advanced him to places of honor and trust. At first I accompanied him during those absences from home, made necessary by these public trusts. But the only change for me consisted in seeing less and less of my husband, while living still in the midst of excitement.

I wearied of this life, the more when two little ones had been granted me whom I could not endure to leave, and whom it was not well to drag about the world with us, to the unsettling of all their habits and comforts.

It was a hard struggle with me to be separated from the husband I loved as fondly as ever; but I at length resolved to let him proceed alone to the National Capital, while I remained at home with my children and Aunt Platt, whose failing health warned us that she had not long to live. Of the latter, it is true, Mrs. Dana offered to take charge; but the offer was not agreeable to my aunt, nor could I forget that I owed much to her kindness, nor be blind to the fact that duty pointed me to a place by her side.

Mr. Vandeleur went away unwillingly. He was not a demonstrative man, but his indifference was not loss of regard, but the result of habit. He missed me from his side, and I know saw many unhappy hours during that first winter of absence. Before Spring Aunt Platt died, and I could not regret that I had not left her to the ministrations of strangers. She had changed greatly in those months of illness. The clergyman of our parish had been assiduous in his attendance upon her, and she had humbly profited by his instructions and warnings. She died at last, in the hopes and consolations of the Christian faith.

The mournful seclusion of my life, the tender love of my children, the solemn and elevating counsels of the clergyman who so often visited us during that winter, all had their effect upon my character. Anne Dana came to us before the death of Aunt Platt, and we drew into a nearness of personal intercourse that gave me new insight into the life of that noble woman. We had a common grief, and we found that, different as were our circumstances and stations there were also common aspirations and hopes between us.

We talked of our children and their future, and the responsibilities and duties which grew out of our domestic relations, and I began to see that, as a wife and mother, I could no longer live for society, that my sphere was narrowed to the home circle, and that my labors and my interests, as well as my enjoyments, must henceforth be centered there.

When Mr. Vandeleur returned in the spring, I represented this my change of feeling and purpose to him. I asked him to permit me to reside henceforth in the country, and to make there a permanent home for the household. It was long before he could consent to this. We compromised by a few winter weeks in town, but even this, as the years passed on, grew irksome to me. But for my love for Harry, I could never have wished to leave the dear home with its beautiful grounds and glimpses of the shining river.

There we kept alive the family heart, all warm and throbbing. There I stayed as much of the time as I could give my own consent to leave Harry, even during the winter. There he came more and more frequently, and for longer and longer periods.

Little by little he imbibed my deep interest in our growing family of lovely girls, and hale and handsome boys. More and more his home attracted him, less and less strong were the habitudes of his youth. Society ceased to interest him. Agriculture took the place of politics. To beautify his home, and make it the source of all beauty and instruction to his children, became the worthiest motive of his life. One day he came to me and showed me the official notice of his appointment to an important foreign mission, together with the rough draft of his declinature, and asked me if he should send the latter.

"Consult your own heart," I answered. "If you can serve God and your country abroad better and more truly than you are doing here, I may not say you nay." An hour afterward, I saw him send away his missive; he had declined the appointment, and home and I had triumphed.

We are the happiest of united families now. Like all neophytes, my convert is a zealot. We can hardly lure him from his home, ever so briefly, and he prefers to go with us for our annual summer week in the dear old cottage, rather than to take part in the brilliant ovations and glittering pageants of the city life, that was once the only existence he thought worth the living.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

As a judge, Bushe was merciful, and, owing to an incident in his early career as a lawyer, he was somewhat slow to convict on circumstantial evidence. A short time after he was called to the bar he was retained to defend a prisoner accused of murder. The victim's name was Walter Meyler, and it was supposed that he had been killed by a party of rebels, of whom one became an informer, and was the chief witness for the prosecution. The witness was correct and careful in all his details. He stated that the body of Meyler had been buried close to the shore, wrapped in a coat of the same texture and color as that stated to have been worn by the deceased. Bushe neither cross-examined a witness, nor called evidence upon the part of his client; and before the judge commenced his charge, the jury stated that they were prepared with their verdict. Bushe said, "Wait a moment, gentlemen—did any of you know Walter Meyler, the deceased?" The reply was, that all the jury knew him well—and immediately Bushe shouted, to the dismay of the auditors, "Walter Meyler, come into court." The supposed deceased rushed upon the table, and, pointing to him, Bushe exclaimed: "There, gentlemen, is my defence!"

WARP AND WEFT;

OR,

THE COTTON FAMINE.

A TALE OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

BY J. F. SMITH,

AUTHOR OF "THE SOLDIER OF FORTUNE," "DICK TARLETON," "THE STEP MOTHER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LI.

The diligence of trade and noiseful gain,
And luxury, more late asleep were laid
All was the night's; and in her silent reign,
No sound the rest of Nature did invade. DRYDEN.

Although unable to explain the why and the wherefore, we feel satisfied we are correct in stating it as a fact, that women, when suddenly and unexpectedly surprised, betray less hesitation and recover themselves more rapidly than men do. This may possibly arise from some peculiarity in their nervous system. Their emotions are more under command; the danger of betraying their feelings may keep them more habitually upon their guard. Confusion is embarrassing, and gives cause for surmises which, where the weaker sex is concerned, we regret to add, are rarely charitable. Like most timid creatures, too, they are constantly upon the alert. Nature, which has denied them force, has given them self-possession as a shield, and in all the minor accidents of life it generally proves an efficient one.

These are suggestions merely, gathered from experience and observation, and we give them for what they are worth.

John Bentley could scarcely suppress a smile at the promptitude with which Bab thrust the green and yellow shawl, together with the cards and cribbage-board, into a closet, and prudently turned the key, calling out all the while, in the most natural tone imaginable, "I am coming, sir, I am coming."

"Your master must not find me here," he whispered.

"I should think not," replied the old woman, drily. "The meeting would not be an agreeable one, and I should lose my place," she added. "Run up to the landing on the third story whilst I let him in. Away with you."

"You would have made an excellent general, Bab," said her visitor, as he obeyed her instructions.

No sooner did the speaker hear the housekeeper unlocking the outer door, than he rapidly retraced his steps, passed through the room where they had been sitting into the chamber of Michael Haman, and from thence by the little staircase into the deserted office on the floor below. Once there, he had his choice of hiding-places; empty presses, closets half filled with lumber, and the huge hungry-looking fire-place partially masked by a pile of broken chairs and desk stools.

"At last," he muttered to himself, in a tone of satisfaction, as he took up a position behind the latter; but before doing so, he tried the key Lin had procured for him in Clerkenwell.

It fitted the iron safe exactly.

"Lor, sir," said Bab, as she preceded her master up the staircase with the light, "who would have thought of seeing you to-night? I had just locked up; but there is a nice fire, and the kettle all but boils."

"Humph!" muttered Michael, looking round the room suspiciously. "You make yourself pretty comfortable, I perceive."

"As comfortable as I can," replied the housekeeper, somewhat tartly, for she could not forget her old habitude, "in this dull, miserable place. Why, even the rats have left it. To be sure, there never was much to bring them here. It's more fit for an owl than a Christian. I do wish," she added, in what was intended for a persuasive tone, "you would take me with you to Manchester."

"I'm plagued enough with you when I come to London," observed Michael Haman. "You know I detest chattering."

"Lord, sir! it is such a relief to have some one to speak to!"

"Can't you talk to yourself? As I do," he mentally added; "as I do."

"I can't answer myself," said the woman, angrily. "But it's just like you. No consideration. Service is no inheritance now-a-days. I shall be found dead in these gloomy old rooms one of these days."

"We must all die," observed her master, philosophically.

"Ah! but it aint pleasant to die alone, without a single friend to say good-bye to—the candle, perhaps, just burning out, and all sorts of queer shadows flickering about the bed-curtains—too weak to reach a drink of water. It makes me melancholy whenever I think of it."

"Pshaw!"

"Do you believe in ghosts, sir?"

"In what?" demanded the old man, sharply.

"In ghosts, sir?"

Michael Haman gave a low, hissing kind of chuckle, the nearest approach to mirth he ever indulged in, and that but rarely.

"You are growing childish," he said.

"Well!" exclaimed Bab, "I certainly never did see anything worse than myself."

"I should think not," replied her master, drily.

"But I do hear uncommon strange noises—a scampering of feet, just like cats on the stairs at night."

"Why, they *are* cats, you silly old fool!" exclaimed the ex-money scrivener, peevishly, for he began to tire of the conversation.

"Lord, sir!" said the housekeeper, with affected simplicity, "what should cats do here, when not even a mouse can live in the place? All starved out years ago."

"You must be saving money, Bab," observed Mr. Haman.

As this was a delicate point, the woman dexterously changed the subject, which, most probably, she had introduced merely for the sake of talking, well knowing that if she had remained silent—a circumstance so contrary to her usual habitude—it would have excited the suspicions of the old man.

"Sometimes," she added, "I fancy the noise comes from the chamber of my young mistress."

"Silence!" interrupted the father of Alice, sternly. "My sainted child is in heaven, and no thoughts of earth can disturb her repose, unless of prayers for those who are left behind."

He did not say for whom.

Bab's purpose was answered. She knew that whilst such thoughts occupied his mind, neither heart nor brain could find room for any other.

Whilst Michael Haman was slowly sipping his tea, the housekeeper took occasion to leave the room under pretence of barring and locking the lower door, as well as to ascertain whether her late visitor had got clear off. Not finding him on the upper landing, she naturally concluded that he had departed.

"All is safe," she muttered to herself. "What a light footstep he has! I thought I should have heard him. He must have left whilst I was talking."

She had only deceived her master—a fault which weighed very lightly upon her conscience. To do her justice, had John Bentley attempted to engage her in the daring scheme he had planned, she would have rejected the proposal firmly. If Bab had little principle, she made up for the deficiency in prudence.

It was nearly ten o'clock when Michael Haman retired for the night. Little did he imagine that his enemy was so near him. The housekeeper heard him lock and bar the door of his room with more than his usual caution. He tried it several times, as if to assure himself the bolts had been shot securely into their sockets.

"He must have brought a great deal of money with him," she thought; "and what is the good of it to him, when he hasn't the heart to spend any? I wonder whether he will leave me anything when he dies! He can't live many years longer. His sins have worn him out.

"What is it to him," she continued, musingly, "how much or how little I have saved? A precious fool I should have been if I had not taken some care against old age. But not enough—not enough!"

For some time Bab amused herself by reckoning upon her fingers the amount of her savings and peculations. There was so much in the savings-bank, a smaller sum in the provident institution, and two hundred pounds lent to a nephew at the West End, on good security.

Feeling sleepy at last, despite the pleasing nature of her occupation, the old woman retired to rest, repeating to herself, "Not so bad, after all; not so bad."

It is rare that, in the bustle and excitement of active life, men can find time for calm reflection. The intervals are few and far between in which the mind, totally disengaged from the interests of the present, has either the courage or inclination to judge the past—arraign it at the tribunal of morality and reason. How few of us, alas! when such a moment does arrive, pass scatheless through the investigation. Life, like the trail of the serpent, leaves its slime upon the heart; and the wisest and best find subjects for repentance. Not one man in the world, perhaps, can pronounce himself exempt.

> "Vain was the man, and false as vain,
> Who said, were he ordained to run
> His long career of life again,
> He would do all that he had done."

Poor Moore! we once heard him recite these lines himself, and have repeated them a hundred times since. They come home to all of us.

Some such feeling passed through the mind of John Bentley when he found himself crouching, hiding like a thief in the deserted offices of Michael Haman—the man he affected to despise as well as hate. He had started in life with the axiom that dishonesty was blunder, and hitherto acted up to it—that is to say, legal dishonesty. At present he was untainted by any offence the law could reach; and, in the bitter humiliation of his reflections, he trembled and hesitated. Had his character been unblemished, the chances are he would have receded from the guilty enterprise—recommenced a fresh career; but pride—the fallen angels' sin—restrained him.

"It is no use shirking the goal, and the race half run," he thought. "A strong breath, a swift foot, and a sure hand must reach it. Hesitation now would be failure—shame—dishonor."

Hearing a noise in the chamber above, he paused to listen. Michael Haman was pacing the floor with a heavy, measured tread. Could he have read all that was passing in the old man's mind, John Bentley would have been struck, perhaps, by the similarity of their reflections.

"The old miser's conscience keeps him awake," he muttered. "I wonder he can return to these gloomy chambers—the scene of his grinding and extortions, the prison of his child. Poor Alice! the only woman I ever really loved, but sacrificed to the world's idol—money."

A slight creaking upon the private staircase which communicated with the rooms above, warned the speaker that his enemy was descending, and he crouched still more closely behind the pile of broken chairs and discarded office stools, which were so arranged that he could witness as well as hear everything that passed.

It was a painful position. The once strong-nerved, proud-spirited John Bentley, who carried his head so high upon 'Change—the daring, successful speculator in the cotton-market—trembled like a child, and scarcely ventured to draw his breath.

If a deep sense of humiliation—humiliation without repentance—could atone, the self-degraded man would have paid the penalty of his crimes in that bitter hour. Never had he felt so completely unnerved. The door creaked upon its hinges as Michael Haman pushed it open; the sound vibrated in the very heart of the pale, conscience-stricken man.

The first sound of Michael Haman's metallic-like voice in some degree restored him to himself; it revived his hate, and with it all the evil passions of his nature.

The ex-money scrivener placed the candle he carried upon one of the empty desks; and gathering the folds of his faded dressing-gown round his meagre limbs, seated himself in the centre of the room, and sighed heavily as he looked around him.

"How desolate the place looks!" he said, speaking aloud. "Yet I remember the time when every hope and energy I possessed were centred here. I was making money then, coining it—squeezed it from the distresses of my fellow-men. I loathe it now. Here, too, came old Bentley, trusting, doubting, to find the assistance he had a right to demand; but I refused him. Money was at a premium then. Would I had not done so; for a curse—the curse of ingratitude—appears to have followed me ever since."

The concealed listener to this singular confession smiled. It was something to hear the man who had descended to make money by buying up his father's acceptances utter the self-accusing acknowledgment.

"Here, too, came his son," continued the speaker, "to propose to me for Alice. The first time—yes, I will do him that justice—the first time I believe he meant sincerely; but the second he came, like some actor, to repeat the words he had studied, parrot-like, by rote—expecting, wishing, calculating to be rejected."

John Bentley felt surprised when he heard how truly the father of Alice had divined him.

"A slave to Mammon," added Michael, "I knew not how fragile a thing a young girl's heart was; *but he knew it*—he, the destroyer. In the strong coarseness of my nature, I grasped it, as if it had been of iron, like my own, and crushed it. Well, well, I have been punished for that, too. The idol I worshipped has turned to clay; I loathe it whilst I cling to it. My age is lonely as my youth, and when I die, no child will shed a tear upon my grave, or offer up a prayer for my repose.

"Even the revenge, anticipation of which has kept me alive for years, seems to pall as it draws near. I must be hard as granite. That satisfaction, at least, shall not escape me."

The speaker drew from his breast a large packet, securely sealed, which he placed in the iron safe, and turned the key twice. Not satisfied with that, he pulled the door by the handle several times, as if to convince himself that it was locked.

"Rest there," he said; "rest there till morning. Never has the old safe guarded a more precious deposit."

Taking up the candle, he paused for several instants before the portrait of his wife, and sighed deeply as he contemplated the faded, dusty canvas. Then, as if moved by some sudden impulse, he turned hastily away, and disappeared by the private staircase, muttering as he went—

"Too late! too late!"

The trembling hearer of this outburst of feeling—this weakness—for such he deemed it, smiled at the accents of self-reproach in which the words were uttered, and rejoiced in the conviction that his enemy was no happier than himself—nay, not so happy, for age had not yet closed the heart of John Bentley to the pleasures of the world; on the contrary, he felt more than ever the slave of its mad passions. Satiety as yet had not palled him. Little did he imagine that the day was not far distant when he too would exclaim—

"Too late! too late!"

Sooner or later the sad conviction arrives to all of us. The inexorable past rears itself like a spectre, and it is rarely a pleasing one.

Creeping to the window, he opened it gently, so as not to attract attention; and for more than an hour remained upon the watch, with no other companion than his own busy thoughts.

Shortly after St. Paul's had struck the hour of twelve, a whistle was heard in the court below—so soft and low that it rose like a whisper to the casement.

John Bentley started from his reverie.

The whistle was repeated.

The sound restored him in an instant to his self-possession, and he gazed into the court. Lin, in the same disguise he wore at the station, was there.

"The fellow is punctual," he muttered.

Making him a sign to wait, the speaker opened the iron safe with the false key, and secured the packet Michael Haman had deposited there.

It never struck him that it might contain more than his father-in-law's will.

"I am not defeated yet," he murmured, as he locked the repository carefully after him. "My wife and her abettors think to ruin me. They will find that I am still her master."

Had he desired it, he might have found a far safer and much more honorable means of asserting the natural supremacy of a husband—her affections. Women are easily influenced through their hearts.

Opening the little packet which had so excited the curiosity of Bab, the fallen, degraded man drew from it a ball of string, which he untwined, and let fall one end into the yard.

"Have you got it?" he whispered.

Lin made a sign that it was all right.

In a few minutes John Bentley drew up a strong, knotted rope, which he secured fast to the sill of the window, and then descended.

"A sailor could not have done it better," observed Lin.

"No words," replied his employer, angrily. "Mount to the chamber."

"And what am I to do when I get there?"

"Remove the rope, and descend by the water-spout."

The gipsy eyed it for an instant, then shook it to assure himself that the spout was firm enough to bear his weight. Assured of that, he had no hesitation, for, as Nell Lee boasted, her son could climb like a wild cat.

"Undo the rope?" he repeated.

"Yes."

"Is that all?"

"All," was the reply. "Lose no time."

In a few seconds his companion was in the room, and commenced unfastening the cord, which John Bentley had tied in a superfluous number of knots. Just as he was undoing the last one, he felt a pair of wiry hands clutched tightly round his throat.

It was Michael Haman. The old man had been unable to sleep, and, hearing a noise in the offices, had stealthily crept down to ascertain the cause.

"Robbers!" he shouted—"thieves!"

"Release me," gasped Lin.

"Never! Help! help! Bab!"

John Bentley heard the words, and a cold perspiration came over him at the thought of the shame and exposure which threatened him. How had he fallen! He was, in truth, a pitiable object, as he stood listening in agony, not daring to fly and leave the accomplice of his crimes behind him; for Lin taken, his own detection, he well knew, would be inevitable.

The cries suddenly ceased, and he fancied that he heard a deep groan. He was not mistaken; it was repeated, and directly afterwards the rope fell at his feet.

He gathered it up mechanically and thrust it into his pocket.

The gipsy followed, gliding rather than climbing down the water-spout.

"What have you done?" demanded his employer.

"This is no place for explanation," replied the ruffian, in a hoarse whisper. "The sooner we are out of this neighborhood the better for both of us."

"*Both of us!*" How his hearer shuddered at the words.

The night was dark, so fortune appeared to favor them, and they quitted the court unperceived, walking at a rapid pace till they reached Cheapside. Neither uttered a word.

"Walk on the opposite side," whispered John Bentley; "we may be remarked."

"Ah! you have your senses about you," observed his companion, as he crossed over.

Not daring to call a cab, the two ruffians, whose equality in crime had now been made equal, pursued their way on foot till they reached the Albany. The drowsy porter merely noticed that two persons passed the lodge; one he knew to be Mr. Bentley. It was a matter of indifference who the other might be: one of his gay companions, no doubt, he thought. That is to say, if he thought at all upon the subject.

On arriving at the splendidly-furnished chambers, their owner sank into a chair. At that moment he would have given worlds to recall the adventure of the night, and he mentally repeated the words of Michael, which he had so lately listened to with scorn—"Too late! too late!"

The consciousness of his crimes had overtaken him at last. For their punishment he had some time yet to wait; unless suspense—dreams that haunt the broken sleep—dread, palsying enjoyment in day's waking hours, may be considered a part of it. They had already fallen upon him.

"There is wine upon the table," he observed.

"Brandy, give me brandy," replied the gipsy.

"John Bentley lit the lamp, and placed a case of liqueurs upon the table.

Lin poured out a large glass. As he raised it to his lips, his employer noticed that the hand and wristband of his shirt were stained with blood.

"What has happened?" he demanded.

"*What do you suppose has happened?*" exclaimed the assassin, insolently. "Did you imagine that I was fool enough to be caught in the trap, whilst you get off scot-free? No, no; we swim or sink together, Mr. Bentley. If I am to hang, I shall have the satisfaction of dangling in good company."

"Wretch, you have murdered him!"

"It was all your fault," said Lin. "You were careful enough of your own safety. If you had not tied the rope in so many knots, I should have been down in the court before the old man could have caught me. I was just about to cut it," he added, "had the knife in my hand, when he came, and——"

"Enough!" said John Bentley, with a shudder of disgust.

Lin poured himself out a second glass of brandy, which he continued to sip for several minutes in silence, whilst his employer sat buried in deep reflection. To all appearance, the murderer felt neither remorse nor care for his own safety; the former was between himself and his own conscience, if he had such a thing—the latter he left entirely to Mr. Bentley.

"We must leave England," said the latter, in the tone of a man who has taken a sudden determination.

"I think it will be as well," observed the gipsy.

"And instantly."

"The sooner the better. Where for?"

"America."

"We needn't hurry about that," replied his accomplice. "The first ship that sails leaves on Friday. I have been watching the papers for the last fortnight."

"Fool!" said John Bentley, through his set teeth. "By that time every port will be guarded by detectives. Our course must be winding as the track of the serpent; but, unlike the serpent, we must leave no trail behind us. We have yet some hours of safety before us," he added, musingly.

"So much the better."

"They must not be wasted."

"I should say not," muttered Lin, stretching forth his hand to fill a third tumbler of brandy.

"Not another drop," said John Bentley, removing the decanter. "You will need all your presence of mind for the next few hours. Follow me!"

Leading the way to his dressing-room, where the fire was already laid, the speaker gave the gipsy an entire change of dress. He next burnt the shirt, whose sleeve and wrist bore such tell-tale evidence. Then filling a portmanteau with clothes and linen, he bade Lin take it upon his shoulders, and they quitted the Albany together.

By the first train the guilty pair started for Dover, crossed over, passed rapidly through France and Belgium into Germany, and finally embarked at Hamburg in a vessel they found ready to sail for New York.

"Well, you are a clever fellow, and no mistake!" observed Lin, as the ship cleared the harbor. "What a fortune we might have made had we been partners earlier!"

John Bentley turned aside with a feeling of disgust and humiliation. "*Partner!*" He, the once proud, prosperous speculator, partner with a murderer!

He had much better have remained contented with his friend and first partner, poor Willie.

CHAPTER LI.

> 'Tis the only discipline we are born for,
> All studies else are but as circular lines:
> And death the centre where they all must meet.
> MASSINGER.

Nine o'clock had struck the following morning, and Bab had everything ready for her master's breakfast. Half-past nine! She had been twice to the door of the bedroom, but could not hear him stirring.

"Tired of counting his money, and overslept himself, no doubt," she thought. Then she wished that she had enough money to tire herself in counting, and wondered why some should have so much, and others so little.

When ten o'clock struck she began to feel alarmed, and ventured to knock at the chamber door.

"Very odd," she muttered. "Never knew him so late before."

As the time passed on, her surprise changed to terror, and, not knowing what else to do, she imparted her fears to Hogg and Grindstone's porter.

"What is to be done?" she added, anxiously. "What can be the cause?"

"Most likely apoplexy," replied the man, with philosophical indifference. "You had better break open the door of his chamber."

"I dare not."

"Not without witnesses, of course," observed her adviser. "I'll go and consult the head of the firm; he is not particularly engaged just now. Wait here."

In a few minutes the speaker returned, accompanied by Mr. Hogg, a stout, active, business-looking person. This gentleman had frequently indulged in curious speculation respecting his singular neighbor, whose chambers he had long been anxious to obtain, to enlarge his own offices, which were much too small to meet the requirements of his steadily increasing business in the colonial line.

"And so your master is dead?" he said, addressing the housekeeper.

"The Lord forbid, sir!" exclaimed Bab.

"Of course, yes—we understand that—all very natural and proper. Run to the station," he added, addressing the porter, "and request the inspector to come with a couple of policemen."

"Directly, sir."

"And tell them to bring a crowbar with them," called his master, as the messenger reached the end of the court.

In a very short time a group of persons were assembled in the room above, all, with the exception of Bab, as cool and collected as if the affair which called them together was one of the common-place, every-day occurrences of life.

The inspector, an experienced old officer, commenced proceedings by a careful examination of the lock of Michael Haman's chamber, to ascertain, probably, whether there were any traces of violence.

"Have you the key?" he asked, addressing himself to the housekeeper.

"No, sir. I think it is on the inside of the lock."

"True; I perceive it. Is there any other key which opens it?"

"Not as I know of," replied Bab.

"Force the door," said the inspector.

The policeman applied the crowbar for several minutes before it gave way, yielding from the hinges instead of the lock, and all entered the apartment. The bed had evidently not been slept in; a coat and hat were thrown carelessly upon it, and the candle had been permitted to burn down to the socket; but no signs of the occupant.

"Singular!" said the inspector, looking round him.

"Very," repeated Mr. Hogg.

"What can have become of him?" thought Bab, beginning to feel exceedingly bewildered.

"Where does this lead to?" asked one of the policemen, pointing to the door of the private staircase.

"The offices below," answered the housekeeper.

"Was your master in the habit of using them?"

"Very rarely," replied the woman; "in fact, never, unless when he arrived too late for the bank, and then he used to lock up his papers and money in the great iron safe."

"And was he too late for the bank yesterday?" inquired the inspector.

"I believe so, sir."

"We had better descend, Mr. Hogg," observed the officer. "I have no doubt we shall find an explanation of the mystery below."

One by one they made their way to the long-abandoned den of the ex-money scrivener. The first object that struck them was the body of Michael Haman lying near the window in a pool of blood.

"Murder!" shrieked Bab, sinking into a chair.

"Don't touch the body!" exclaimed the inspector, hastily, to the policemen, who immediately drew back. "Stabbed in the chest," he continued, making his observations; "and the right hand fearfully cut. There must have been a severe struggle. Did you hear any noise last night?"

This was addressed to the housekeeper.

"Lord bless you! no, sir!" replied the woman. "I sleep on the upper floor, at the back of the kitchen. They might have murdered everybody in the court without my hearing them."

"The room is very close," observed Mr. Hogg. "Any objections to the windows being opened?"

Lin had carefully closed the one he escaped by after him.

"Not the slightest," said the officer, and the porter immediately threw open the casements. A rush of cool air followed, and a faint groan was heard.

So thoroughly were the police convinced of the death of the old man, that it was not till the groan was repeated that they even suspected it to have proceeded from him.

"He lives!" cried the inspector, greatly surprised.

"Thank God," murmured Bab; "thank God. I could not have slept another night in the place if my poor master had been murdered."

"Very likely you would not," replied the officer, drily.

The policemen, by direction of their superior, raised the still breathing body carefully, and carried it as gently as possible to the chamber above, and placed it upon the bed. Surgical assistance was immediately sent for, and by the time Mr. Ashton, who had arrived in London by the first morning train, called at the office, the wounded man was sufficiently recovered to recognize him.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the worthy manufacturer, greatly shocked; "who can have done this?"

"I will tell you in a few moments," replied Michael Haman, speaking very faintly. "Feel under my pillow, between the bolster and the bed."

Mr. Ashton did as he directed, and drew forth a large key.

"Strange!" murmured the dying man; "very strange!"

"What is strange?"

"Open the iron safe below; Bab will conduct you. The will ought to be there, in a packet with other papers."

In a few minutes his brother executor returned.

"Gone!" he said. "Gone! The safe is empty."

"I thought so," said Michael, "I thought so. Now, do you ask me who has done this?" he added, looking anxiously into his face.

Mr. Ashton made no reply; he did not dare trust himself to pronounce the name that was uppermost in his thoughts.

"You spoke of other papers," he observed, after a pause. "Were they of value."

"Money," gasped the old man, "money; but not much, and securities which he cannot negotiate. Most likely by this time he has destroyed them."

"*He!*" repeated the manufacturer. "*He!*"

"You know who I mean?"

"I dare not even guess."

"John Bentley," exclaimed the ex-money scrivener, with a sudden effort; "the destroyer of my child, the husband of my niece—the schemer, the heartless plotter—the disappointed heir."

"You do not mean to say you recognized him?" whispered his brother executor.

"No," replied Michael Haman, after a pause. "I will not die with a lie upon my lips. Bitterly as I hate him, I will do my enemy no wrong. The man I discovered in the office below was a stranger to me; and yet," he added, musingly, "I have a vague recollection of his features."

"Such an accusation," observed Mr. Ashton, gravely, "should not be made lightly. Think of the misery of your niece—the shame that must fall upon her children."

"Poor Mary!" murmured the old man. "So like my Alice, too! Poor girl! poor girl!"

The surgeon, who during the above conversation had remained at another part of the room, now interfered, and insisted on his ceasing to exert himself.

"A few minutes—an hour or two more or less," said the ex-money scrivener, "what does it signify? I know that I am dying. I read my sentence in your eyes when you probed my wounds. You can't deceive me."

The gentlemen assured him that they had no wish to deceive him.

The patient shook his head.

"As a proof," added the senior practitioner, "although far from considering your case as utterly hopeless, we advise you to make such arrangements as you may feel necessary."

"I have no arrangements to make," murmured the old man.

"They allude to your will," whispered Mr. Ashton, gently.

"I deposited it two days since with my banker in Manchester," replied Michael Haman. "Telegraph for Mary and her son Frederick. I should lie to see them before I die. No one else," he added; "no one else."

"Not your eldest nephew?"

"Pah!" ejaculated the old man. "Heartless as his father! His living image, too! But brainless. The serpent without its sting."

Whilst Mr. Ashton was writing the telegram, the speaker demanded of the surgeons how long they thought he might last? A question often asked, but rarely answered.

They replied they could not tell.

"You mean you won't tell," observed the dying man in a dissatisfied tone. "Well! each one to his craft, I suppose, although I cannot see the use of it in my case. I am not a child. Listen to me," he continued. "I know that your skill is powerless to save my life—I feel it ebbing slowly from me. Use it to prolong it for a day or two, if possible; direct all your endeavors to that."

The surgeons assured him they would do so.

"I require time for reflection."

"We do not apprehend that any decided change will take place before eight-and-forty hours," added the senior practitioner, speaking very slowly.

"Long enough," was the reply. "Long enough."

During the day a singular fancy took possession of Michael Haman, whose will, despite his great age and the weakness arising from loss of blood, appeared as firm as ever. He insisted on being removed to the apartment of his daughter Alice, and placed in the bed she formerly occupied.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Bab. "Why, it hasn't been slept in for more nor twenty years."

"No matter."

"It must be damp," added the housekeeper.

"I have little time to catch cold," observed her master, with a faint smile.

The old woman left the room to prepare the long-abandoned chamber of her young mistress.

"I shall die with better thoughts there," said the ex-money scrivener, in answer to the remonstrances of the surgeons and Mr. Ashton.

It was only when they perceived that their refusal to comply with his request increased the excitement of their patient to a dangerous degree, that the medical men gave way, and consented to his wishes being complied with.

"After all," they added in a whisper to Mr. Ashton, "it cannot much signify, an hour or two, more or less. Our art is powerless to save him."

The worthy manufacturer heard the decree in silence.

That same day the house in St. Ann's Square, together with the shop in Deansgate, the property of Lin, was to be sold by public auction. For more than a week bills had been placarded in Manchester announcing the sale, and the auction-room was crowded with purchasers and idlers. Amongst others came Frederick Bentley: not that he had any intention of bidding for them; curiosity alone, arising from the deep interest he felt in the circumstances which led to their disposal, brought him to the place.

Mr. Sharpsprite, who was making an excellent thing of his client's "unavoidable absence," as he delicately phrased it, appeared all life and good humor. A great change for the better had taken place in his appearance. A handsome suit of black, of the professional cut, had replaced the rusty frock coat he lately wore, and a massive gold chain and key—quite plain, by-the-by—dangled from his waistcoat pocket.

Had he lately dropped into an unexpected inheritance, the lawyer could not have been in better spirits.

As the sale was about to commence, a well-dressed, gentlemanly-looking man, whom no one appeared to recognize, lounged into the room.

The bids for the house in the square had risen gradually to fifteen hundred pounds, and were still progressing, much to the satisfaction of Mr. Sharpsprite, when the gentleman demanded of the auctioneer under what authority he was selling it.

"The authority of the owner," was the reply.

"To yourself?"

"No; to his agent."

"Have you any objection to produce it?" asked the stranger. "I am the last bidder but one; the property seems likely to fetch a large sum; and before offering any further——"

"Very natural, very proper and business-like," interrupted the lawyer, drawing a deed from his pocket. "There, sir, is a power of attorney from my respected client, Mr. Norle, whose unavoidable absence from Manchester no one regrets more deeply than myself."

At the words "unavoidable absence" there was a general laugh amongst the auditory.

"A fact, gentlemen, I assure you," added Sharpsprite, winking, at the same time, to those who were nearest to him—"on my honor."

"Oh! oh!" exclaimed a dozen voices, and "Bravo, Sharp-practice."

Mr. Sharpsprite turned very red in the face, and commenced playing with his handsome new watch-chain somewhat nervously.

"I presume, sir," he said, turning to the stranger, who appeared to be carefully perusing the document, "it is not the first power of attorney you have read?"

"Not exactly the first," replied the gentleman, with a quiet smile.

At the same time he folded it up carefully, and coolly put it into his pocket.

"Dear me! how singular!" ejaculated the lawyer. "You are not to keep it, even in the event of your becoming the purchaser of the house."

"Indeed!"

"*Of course not. It is the original, not a copy.*"

"*I am perfectly aware of that.*"

"You must give it me back again. It is the authority under which I act."

"And which the deed I now produce cancels," replied the stranger.

Mr. Sharpsprite turned as pale with fear as he had before been red with anger.

"The sale, gentlemen," continued the speaker, "can proceed no further at present. In virtue of the powers I hold from Mr. Norle, I forbid it."

"I dispute it," shouted the lawyer, partially recovering himself. "His name isn't Norle."

"The deed under which you have been acting is signed so," observed Mr. Twisselton Phlem, whom our readers have doubtless recognized.

"That has nothing to do with it. His name is Lin Lee. I can prove it."

"No doubt you can."

"He is a gipsy," added Sharpsprite.

"I believe he does belong to that peculiar people," observed his brother practitioner, calmly. "But whether his name is Norle or Lin, matters little as far as my powers are concerned, since they are signed in both. And I warn all persons who have purchased any of the property in question, not to pay any further moneys into the hands of his late agent, who, I regret to add, for the honor of the profession I am a member of, has acted most dishonestly."

"You are witnesses, gentlemen," cried the baffled and disappointed Mr. Sharpsprite, greatly excited. "You heard his words? They are libellous."

"Shall I repeat them?"

"As you please. I shall decidedly bring an action against you. Your name, sir? I presume you carry a card."

The gentleman politely handed one to the auctioneer.

"Read it! Let's hear it?" cried a dozen voices.

"Mr. Twisselton Phlem."

At this redoubtable name, his brother lawyer would have sneaked out of the room, but, unfortunately for him, several purchasers of portions of Lin's property which had been previously sold were amongst the auditors. Several laid hands upon him, declaring they would not lose sight of him till he returned their money. Others, who had paid a deposit merely were equally clamorous.

"It is in the bank, gentlemen!" roared Sharpsprite; "it is in the bank!"

"Fortunately," observed the auctioneer—a most respectable man—"a very considerable portion remains also in my hands."

A loud cheer followed this announcement.

"And you all know me sufficiently well, I trust," added the speaker, "to feel assured that it is safe. I question," he continued, "whether the sales made prior to the revocation of the power of attorney will not be found perfectly legal."

"Perfectly," repeated Mr. Twisselton Phlem; an admission that made him exceedingly popular with the purchasers, who at once released Mr. Sharpsprite from their grasp.

"It is no use going to the bank," said the speaker, as the discomfited lawyer was stealing out of the auction-room—"a *distringas* has been laid upon the money. Sorry to act harshly to a member of my own profession, but the interests of my respectable client, whose unavoidable absence from Manchester you lately so feelingly regretted——"

Roars of laughter drowned the rest of his words, during which the discomfited Mr. Sharpsprite slunk away unmolested.

John Bentley was not far wrong when he pronounced his friend Twisselton Phlem to be a clever man. He certainly was an exceedingly clever one.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

—When an extravagant friend wishes to borrow your money, consider which of the two you had rather lose.

DEATH OF LORENZO DE MEDICI,

April 8th, 1492.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY

Lorenzo the Magnificent was sick,
And death drew near.
Beneath his armed heel
Fair Florence, deck'd in beauty as a bride,
Crouch'd, with a vassal's signet on her brow.
Pictures and gems and all the world of art,
Long offering incense to him as a god,
Lay dormant on the altar of his soul,
That wrought remorsefully with shades unseen
And bitter memories. Fast by the couch
Pelitiano bent, his poet-friend,
Like breathing sculpture, venting heavy sighs,
And naught could tempt him, night or day to leave
His noble patron.
Hark—a feeble tone!
"*Call me Savonarola.*"
All amazed
The courtiers stood.
Prompt at the summon'd word,
The Prior of St. Marks, austere and stern,
He, whose rough eloquence had shook the land,
Came to the dying prince.
"Three things disturb
My parting soul:—Volturna's ruthless sack—
Spoils wrested from the Pazzi—and the blood
Pour'd out in Florence."
Terror so convuls'd
Lorenzo in confession, that the priest,
Though to such soft unction seldom mov'd,
Commiserating said, in gentle voice,
"Our God is merciful.
Yet are three things
Required of thee, ere thou canst meet in peace
The eternal Judge.
First, Have full faith in God."
"Father! I have."
"Next, Restitution make
Of all unrighteous gains; or bind thy son
To carry out that unfulfill'd design."

Grief and surprise o'erswept the pallid face,
The heaving bosom told its strife awhile,
And then he bow'd assent.
But towering high
In majesty, by outstretch'd hand enforc'd
And awful tone, the closing fiat came:
"*Give liberty to Florence.*"
Gathering up
The remnant of his strength, Lorenzo turn'd
His back with scorn, while like a flame in ice
The haughty Medicean spirit flash'd
From the glazed eye.
As one who shuns to hold
Communion with impenitence in sin,
Savonarola from the palace pass'd
With solemn port, and left the dying man
Unshriven and unabsolved.

New York, May 20th, 1863.

FOREST ADVENTURES.—No. 18.

BY COL. WALTER B. DUNLAP.

I TAKE PAY FOR MY DEAD HORSE.

Fitzeben prepared me a fine stew from a part of one of the kids which Bomus had furnished, and when I had eaten this, and lighted my pipe, I gave a detailed account of my night's adventures, which was duly translated by Tambet to the listening savages. Harry blamed himself much that he had not followed me; but he lost sight of me within ten minutes after we discovered the koodoos, and did not think of me again until he found that I alone failed to appear after the chase was over.

"Of course," said he, "when we found that you were absent, we were very uneasy. Abner and I and Dan took the dogs and set out after you. We struck your trail through the wait-a-bit thicket, and the dogs led us on until we came to the old river-bed, and there we lost you. We kept up the search until dark, and then we came home, hoping that you might have come in ahead of us."

I was furthermore informed that my boy Dan, with two of the dogs, had been out in the storm more than half the night. He had followed my track as far as the little lake at the edge of the forest, and there the dogs had again lost the scent. I could easily account for this. It had been raining some time when he reached the lake, and as I had ridden close by the water's edge, I suppose the tide must have covered my trail.

But the season of deepest fear was later in the night, when Dan aroused his companions, and informed them that he had heard a lion roaring in the forest. Two of the native hunters came up shortly afterwards, and declared that the lion had found a victim. They knew it by the tones of his voice. However, it seemed that Ben Gilroy had quieted their fears in a measure.

"Don't make such a fuss about the colonel," he said, while the others were worrying and imagining all sorts of evil. "He'll turn up all right. Lions can't kill him. Lord bless your simple souls, I've known him to go through dangers such as would knock forty thousand lions into a cocked hat! Go to bed, and wait till morning."

I smiled as Harry repeated Ben's words; for I remembered the many hair-breadth escapes we had had together in the wilds of Western America.

"Wasn't I right?" cried the old fellow, slapping me upon the shoulder. "Lord bless 'em! they can't kill you and me, colonel. They don't get up dangers big enough for that in this section."

"Bah!" grunted Fitzeben, showing his ivories, and shaking his tub-like belly, "I reckon I'se seed ole Ben Gilroy when he wa'n't so mitey pompositous as he be now. Golly, don't I 'member when he liked to cotch de alligator down in ole Lou'sana! Yah, yah, ha!"

Ben caught up a stick of wood, and aimed it at the darkey; but the latter dodged behind Abner, and avoided the missile.

"I'll have to sell that nigger to the Western savages for them to make pork of," said Ben, as he laid down the stick.

"'Twouldn't be de fust time ye'd sold de best friend ye'd got—not by a cussed sight! How's dat, ole big-belly!"

Ben laughed, and we all joined him; and Fitzeben was suffered to finish the dish of stewed kid which I had left.

I must here remark that the three natives who had first met me in the forest, and had led our party to the village, had shown quite an attachment to us since we had camped there. Their names were Booboo, Zooky, and Tickomy. In many respects they were unlike others of the Bakalahari stock. They had stouter limbs; they had keener eyes; they had more intelligence; and they possessed more courage. They were brothers; and though they could not tell me why they were so different from their fellows, yet I had no difficulty in guessing. They told me that their father died when they were little children, and they remembered nothing about him, save that he was very strong, and went often to battle. I simply made up my mind that their father had not been of the old worn-out stock of the Bakalahari. All three of them were between thirty and forty years of age, Booboo being the oldest, and Tickomy the youngest. I have spoken thus of these fellows because I had determined to hire them to accompany me if I could. Tickomy could converse with me quite well, and I was satisfied that in a little while he would be able to interpret for us.

Towards the middle of the forenoon, after the sun had got well up, and the wet had dried from the shrubbery, we mounted our horses, and set off to find my koodoo skins and saddle. My best horse was gone; I realized it as I rode by Harry's side, struggling to keep up with him as we dashed over the plain; and I wondered when I should make the loss good. However, I was not entirely horseless, for I had three very fair ones left; and Jot assured me that the one which Dan had been in the habit of riding was better than that which I then bestrode.

I had no difficulty in finding the place where I had spent the night; and we found my saddle and koodoo skins just as I had left them. Then I led the way to my dead horse, and I felt sad enough when I beheld his horribly mangled situation by broad daylight. Not only were his throat and breast frightfully lacerated, but his back and right side were torn clean to the bones.

"I must have those two lions," I said, as I gazed upon the mangled carcass of my steed.

"They'll be sure to come back to-night," replied Jot.

I knew that as well as he. I knew that the deadly marauders would come back to finish their repast; and I meant to be ready for them. My companions joined me in the plan, and we proceeded to make ready for the occasion. Jot had his hatchet with him; and when I had selected the most favorable spot for a cover, I cut down some thickly-leaved boughs and fashioned an abatis, behind which we could rest without danger of being detected by the lions. Ben and Abner suggested that I had better select a spot a little further away from the dead horse; but I thought not. I meant to have a fair chance for a shot, being determined upon revenge for the loss I had sustained. The peculiar color of the lion—the dead, tawny tinge—so naturally blends with the gloom of night that, even in bright starlight, he cannot be distinguished at any great distance.

When we had made our preparations we returned to the village, taking the saddle and koodoo skins with us; and when Bomus was informed that we meant to slay the lions, he was overjoyed. They had not been visited by a lion for over a year, and the presence of these fellows had spread terror in Gichy.

That afternoon we took a turn to the eastward, killing two fine gembocks and a good fat buffalo cow.

After supper we prepared our arms; loading our rifles with the utmost care, and being sure that our knives and hatchets were sharp. It may be asked what use we intended to make of these latter weapons in lion hunting. I can only answer that I prepared mine from habit. I would rather be found ninety-and-nine times with sharp knife and hatchet when I have no use for them, than be caught once without them when I want them. We secured the dogs in the wagons, and left our horses at their pickets, for we wanted nothing in our company that would be likely to startle the lions before the proper time. Just as the sun was sinking behind the line of western forest, we shouldered our rifles and set forth. Booboo and his two brothers, and Bomus, with six of his chief men, bore us company. More of the natives were anxious to go, but I would not allow it.

We reached the spot by the time it was fairly dark, finding the carcass of the horse undisturbed, and our abatis as we had left it. Harry and I proceeded to arrange matters, giving each man his station, and directing him to remain as we placed him.

At nine o'clock we had warning of the approach of the lions. First we heard a crashing of the bushes, which sound came nearer and nearer, until at length two dark objects emerged from the brush and moved slowly towards the dead horse. There were no clouds in the heavens, and the storm of the preceding night had served to clear the atmosphere, so that the moon, five days old, which hung in the west, gave us considerable light. At all events, there was light enough to enable me to trace the outlines of the male lion very distinctly; and an old Trojan he was, too. His thick, heavy mane swept the ground as he walked, and his tread was as solid as that of a large ox. As the pair came near to the carcass they stopped, and pretty soon Mr. Lion opened his throat for a serenade. First came three or four low, sighing moans, and then followed a deep, powerful roar, increasing in force and volume until the very earth shook. I heard a nestling sound in the direction of the place where I had stationed Bomus and his men, and upon turning my atten- that way, I saw that they were backing out from the cover. The roar was too much for their nerves.

Three separate times did the male lion break the air with his roar, each time commencing with the moaning prelude, and ending with a peculiarly tremulous, sighing cadence; and while he was thus engaged the female unceremoniously commenced eating.

By and by the last echo of the thundering serenade had died away upon the trembling air, and while yet the vibrations were throbbing upon my ear, the old lion walked up and commenced his supper. Harry, whose station was next to me, whispered to know what I would do about firing. He thought we should never have a better chance. I asked Ben and Abner if they were ready, and they said they were. I asked them if they could obtain a good aim, and they said that they could.

Ben and I were to fire at the lion, and Harry and Abner were to fire at the lioness. I had a capital rest for my piece, and I was able to draw a line striking directly behind the shoulder. There was light enough to enable me to be pretty sure of my mark, for I had spent much time and much powder and ball in practising rifle-shooting by night.

And here allow me to remark that every man who intends to arm and equip himself for the hunting grounds of South Africa ought to practice shooting at a mark by night. The skin of some animal, wrapped around a log, is a good mark; and, what is better still, some living animal which you intend to kill. The difficulty is not that the hunter fails to distinguish his mark by night, but the trouble is in striking the line of sight along the barrel of the rifle. Of course we suppose that there shall be a good starlight, if not a moon; for no mortal eye can aim a rifle in utter darkness.

Ben Gilroy was getting anxious. He said that his eye was already cocked out of shape trying to keep a "bead" upon the lion, and if he didn't fire soon, he should fire wild.

There was a slight fluttering about my heart as I ordered my companions to be ready, but there was no quiver in my frame. I held my piece with a grip of iron, and my finger rested upon the trigger as lightly as though I were about to fire at a painted target.

At length the word was given, and almost simultaneously our pieces were discharged. In an instant I had dropped my Wrisley, and caught up my double-barrelled rifle, and by the time the smoke had lifted I was ready to fire again. When I next obtained a view of the field, I found that the lioness had disappeared; but the old male stood by the carcass of the horse, with his head erect, his mane bristling, and his eyes glaring like balls of fire. He seemed to have waited for the rising of the smoke as well as we, though in one respect we had him at a disadvantage: He had been surprised, and we had not. But I did not allow him a long time to consider. He was just sweeping the ground with his tail, and giving breath to a defiant growl, when I let fly again, Harry and Ben following my example.

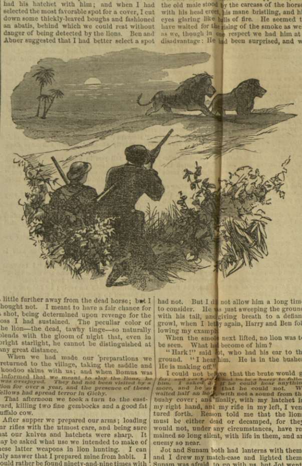
When the smoke next lifted, no lion was to be seen. What had become of him?

"Hark!" said Jot, who had his ear to the ground. "I hear him. He is in the bushes. He is making off."

I could not believe that the brute would go far; and yet I [illegible] not be in a hurry to follow him. I asked Jot if he could hear anything more, and he said that he could not. We waited half an hour, with not a sound from the bushy cover; and finally, with my hatchet in my right hand, and my rifle in my left, I ventured forth. Reason told me that the lions must be either dead or decamped, for they would not, under any circumstances, have remained so long silent, with life in them, and an enemy so near.

Jot and Sunam both had lanterns with them, and I drew my match-case and lighted them. Sunam was afraid to go with us, but Jot went, and Tickomy craved the privilege of taking the other lantern and going with him. We moved very cautiously, the torch-bearers with their hatchets raised, and I with my rifle ready. Not far off we found the lion, in a thicket of bushes, dead as was the horse upon which he had come to feast. And this was not all. At no great distance, fallen at the foot of a large tree, was the lioness, also dead.

We were not long in removing the skins from the dead lions, and when that had been done, the heads were cut off, one of which Bomus himself bore back in triumph to the village. We reached our camp an hour past midnight; and while I was trying to sleep, the inhabitants of Gichy were rending the air with shouts and yells of frenzied joy.



A FIFTH AVENUE SCENE.

We are never weary of admiring the ivy-clad churches of New York. One in particular we often pass, half hidden amid trees and flowers and foliage. Often have we lingered on a pleasant Sunday to listen to the soothing strains of the organ through the open doors and windows. It may be heterodox to say it, but devotion has overtaken us in that way that we might not have found in any other. Yesterday the church gate was open, and the fresh green grass was spaded up and tossed on one side; for there was a new-made grave, and on the very brink of it, joyous little birds were singing. Now Pleyel's lovely hymn stole upon the air from a regimental band, and through the street we caught a glimpse of a coffin, draped with the bright flag we all love, and snowy with fragrant white flowers, borne upon the shoulders of pall-bearers; while on either side walked the mourners, with uncovered heads. As the soldiers parted at the gateway, the solemn procession moved slowly on, over the scented grass and under the drooping branches, to the grave. Little children peeped curiously through the iron railing as the flag and the flowers were removed from the coffin lid; the hurried street-driver forgot his busy errand and paused for a brief moment to gaze and think, while from lip to lip, as the coffin was lowered, came the sympathetic inquiry: "Who is it?" Who? Not *your* husband, or son, or brother, or father; but only one of the many whose blood shall never have been shed in vain in this most righteous war. Who? Only Lieutenant ———. *You* never saw his face; you scarce catch the name as it trips over the tongue; but for all that, your heart knows a strange pang that he is dead, for well you know that *somewhere*, love sits weeping in that bright sunshine.

And now the slanting sun gilds the painted church windows, and the sexton locks the church-yard gate, and the crowd disperses, and the dead lieutenant is left in the cool dews of evening, and the departing feet of his comrades keep time to the plaintive music of the band, as it grows fainter and fainter in the air. FANNY FERN.

"HURRY UP."

The present age lives only for the minute. Railroad conductors and omnibus drivers have not the sole monopoly of the expression "Hurry up." The poor little baby of 1863 is made to recognize it, and allowed short time for growing and learning. It is to be taught precocious habits of personal cleanliness, at what cost soever to its health, lest some trouble be else incurred by the lazy nursery laundress. Young girls must shorten the excellent period of doll-playing to become miniature belles, and marry early. Young boys must smoke at six and earlier, thus forfeiting a gradual, steady vigor, and losing perfected, for *sham* manliness. Young ladies must go through their education with a hop-skip-and-jump celerity, which is safe in all cases to ensure superficiality Everything must be abbreviated, cut short and curtailed. Nobody has any time for anything, and so premature old age comes on, and looking with weary eyes over the back-track of time, its travellers see many a quiet, shady spot where they wish that they had stopped to rest, instead of galloping at break-neck speed along life's dusty highway. FANNY FERN.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

NEW HAVEN.—A man who, in making purchases on credit, misrepresents his pecuniary condition on points concerning which he has positive knowledge and which are susceptible of the clearest verification, is guilty of fraud and may be arrested. But a mere statement that the purchaser is solvent, and is doing a prosperous business, is not enough to hold him for fraud even though untrue, because such an assertion is founded to a great extent on mere opinion, and it is difficult to show that the purchaser knew it to be false at the time he made it. But if he should say that his capital was ten thousand dollars; that his stock of goods on hand was worth five thousand dollars; that he had debts due him to the amount of eight thousand dollars, and owned real and personal estate (in addition to his stock of goods) worth five thousand dollars; and it should turn out that his capital was not $10,000 but less; that he had only $2,000 or $3,000 in debts due him, and that he had none of the real or personal estate alleged, he would then be held to have perpetrated a fraud. Or if any one of these allegations *which influenced the creditor to sell him on credit* should turn out to be false, the purchaser might be held on an order of arrest and sent to prison unless he paid the debt. It is necessary, therefore, for a merchant to put specific questions to a customer whose soundness he suspects; and it would be well to reduce the examination to writing and have the purchaser sign it, so there could be no dispute as to what representations were actually made. In the case you mention, we think it would be difficult, if not impossible, to hold the purchaser on a charge of fraud.

E. C., of West Pittston, puts the following old puzzle as though it had never been heard of before; but we publish it as a nut for our young mathematical readers to crack: "Two men, A and B, agree to dig an excavation of exactly one hundred yards, cubic measurement, for the sum of one hundred dollars, which would be one dollar a yard, amounting to fifty dollars each; but, owing to some difficulty which attended a portion of the excavation, A agrees to give B one dollar and twenty-five cents a yard to dig that most difficult portion, he to have seventy-five cents a yard for digging the rest, with the understanding that each one should dig fifty dollars worth. B, after digging forty yards, claims that he has earned his fifty dollars, which we think is correct; but A, after digging sixty yards, which is the balance of the one hundred, claims that he has earned his fifty dollars also, which we think is not correct, for sixty yards at seventy-five cents a yard would only amount to forty-five dollars. These two friendly neighbors have had some very unpleasant feelings towards each other owing to this; but both have agreed to abandon all unfriendly feelings and abide by your decision, if it will not be intruding on your columns to give it. How much should each have excavated in order to have been entitled to fifty dollars apiece?"

YPSILANTI.—You ought to be able to ascertain the average price of real estate in Michigan from some one near home. What is it in Ypsilanti? The principles that govern securities on loans are the same the world over. As a general thing, the rule that the higher the rate of interest one gets, the poorer his security is, applies everywhere. The Duke of Wellington used to say, and from him it has passed into a maxim in Europe, that "good interest means bad security." The less interest a capitalist gets, the less amount he loans on any given piece of property, and the better, consequently, is his security. But, of course, where a State (as is the case in some of the Western States) passes laws legalizing high rates of interest, such as ten and twelve per cent., the rule no longer holds good; because the demand for money in such communities is so much greater than the supply, that a capitalist can exact perfectly good security even at such exorbitant rates as we have mentioned.

HUSBAND.—We do not know any better way for a husband who is "constantly annoyed by a squalling baby" than to take hold and help keep the baby quiet. When an infant cries a great deal, it is a pretty sure sign that something is the matter with it—that it needs careful tendance and much soothing, and not that it is cross and ill-tempered. In the case of your baby, which you say you "know to be a cross and bad-tempered little thing," there may be an exception to the general rule. It may have inherited its disposition from its father. If this be so, you are doubly bound to be patient and long-suffering with the poor child. At any rate, you have no business to fret and grumble at your wife, and play the part of a sore-headed dog generally in your family.

HOSEA.—If you are so prejudiced against the "school of medicine" to which you refer that you would "rather die than be cured by one of them," as you express it, you will probably find no difficulty in dying; so, do not be uneasy about the matter. You remind us of the old doctor who, when in a critical condition, was advised by a number of his fellow physicians, who were holding a consultation over him, to suffer himself to be wrapped in a wet sheet, summoned strength enough to exclaim with indignation—"Never; I would sooner *die* a *victim to science* than be *saved* by *quackery*." And die he did, in the most scientific manner.

SIC TRANSIT.—There is no necessity for any man's accepting a challenge in any of the New England States. Public opinion has there set such a ban upon duelling, that no duellist could live there with any degree of comfort; and the test of courage among New England gentlemen is of a far more Christian character than that of a single combat with deadly weapons. It may be that in some communities a man would find himself under a pressure in this respect greater than it would be possible for any but the very highest type of human nature to bear; but, still, it is best always to assume that it is never necessary for a man to do wrong.

D. N.—Of course you are not to blame for having such a strong and tenacious desire for life and such a horror at the idea of dying or being killed while young; nor are such feelings any sign of cowardice. The very fact that whenever you go into battle you feel a shrinking horror, and are obliged to summon up all your sense of duty and your most ardent patriotism to enable you to do effective service shows that you have courage of the best kind. But, of course, the life of a soldier is not the best suited to a person of your temperament. You would do much better in some other branch of the public service, or in private life.

WILLIAM.—If you have actually tried salt-water bathing, and know that it always disagrees with you, what is the use of your arguing the question with a person who of course has no knowledge whatever as to its effect upon you, but reasons merely on general principles in support of a theory. Your case has passed from the domain of argument and theory into that of established fact, and there you should let it rest, undisturbed by theorizers.

W. S. D. wants to know how the words *drift, sky* and *sun* are parsed, in the following verse:

"On sheltered banks, beneath the dripping eaves,
Spring's earliest nurselings spread their growing leaves,
Bright with the hues from wider pictures won,
White, azure, golden—*drift*, or *sky* or *sun*."

As this will be a good grammatical exercise for the boys and girls who read the LEDGER, we will leave the problem for them to solve.

URANUS.—What is the use of croaking? You cannot possibly get any comfort out of the blues; nor out of "melancholy forebodings for the future." Perhaps if you would yourself actually do something for the country involving a sacrifice of some portion of your wealth, or of your comfort for a time, you would feel better and get a more cheerful view of things.

IRENE.—The best thing for a young lady to do, when she "becomes interested in a young gentleman," is to keep quiet and let things take their course. She should of course behave with lady like cordiality towards him, but nothing more, until he asks her to become his wife.

E. L.—In all matters wherein doubts arise as to what course you should pursue, you ought to give virtue the benefit of the doubt, and do nothing which you do not know to be right.

ILL-USED LOVER.—This much-abused gentleman informs us that he has been the victim of the arts of a designing girl, "who seems to have devoted her great talents and accomplishments to the degrading purposes of alluring unsuspecting men into her toils and then trifling with the holiest affections of the human heart. My case is simply this: I was engaged to be married to this young lady, having led her to suppose that I was wealthy, *merely for the purpose of testing the honesty of her affections*; and when I came to inform her of the real facts of the case, she declined to carry out her engagement, thus proving what I had feared might be the case and justifying the course I had pursued. What I want to know is first, generally, whether men any longer have any rights which designing women are bound to respect; and secondly and particularly, what I had better do in the case I have submitted?" In reply to your first question, we without the slightest hesitation say that men still have rights which not only *designing* women, but women in general are bound to respect. To your second question, we answer that the best thing for you to do would be to drop the subject of the broken engagement and everything connected with it, at once. You were clearly in the wrong. According to your own statement, you were guilty of a fraud in contracting the engagement, and therefore it was not at all binding on the young lady. The reason you assign for having perpetrated the fraud was almost as disgraceful as the swindle itself; and taken altogether, the transaction shows that you are a mean-spirited, suspicious and dishonest person, whom it would be an act of egregious folly for any woman to marry.

JOHN SMITH asks, "Why is it that married gentlemen travelling with their wives enter their names on the hotel registers thus—'John Jones and *Lady*?' I am a matter-of-fact individual, and not usually suspicious, but when I read these records I am often tempted to infer that the '*lady*' may not be the wife. Don't you think it would be a better practice for the husband to tell the honest truth, and let the world know who *is actually* with him, by making his entry thus—'John Jones and *Wife*'—that is, if he really has his own wife with him?" Yes, by all means. *Wife* is one of the most honored titles which any woman can bear, and no one need be ashamed of it. The custom of writing "John Jones and *Lady*," instead of "John Jones and *Wife*," arises from the innate snobbery of those who help to make the custom. The veriest married loafer in the land, when entering his name, &c., in a hotel register, is always certain to write "*and Lady*" instead of "*and Wife*;" and when speaking of his wife he always refers to her as "his lady." This custom is one which is eminently fit for loafers and ignoramuses to follow; but married persons of intelligence and good sense should stick to their *wives* on making their entries in hotel registers as well as on other occasions.

HARRISON.—In some rustic parts of the old country, especially in Scotland and the north of England, a woman, amongst the operative classes, never takes *Mrs.*, but preserves her maiden name after marriage. In France, also, this custom prevails. In large towns—the hotbeds of civilization—it is quite the reverse; and married women of all ranks insist upon all the honors. In respect to married cousins, much depends on previous intimacy, whether you persist in calling them Emily, Caroline, or Mary after marriage, or by the more matronly name of Missis. But there can be no harm in addressing them by letter "My dear Cousin."—One side of her intended should be as good as another to a lady. Etiquette becomes childish and unmannerly when it disputes about sides. People that are particularly formal and precise are rude and vulgar, it matters not what their rank may be. The right hand is the post of honor; but if a man gives a lady his right arm, she gives him her left.

S. L. G.—It is not always the case that what a man *thinks* is his duty actually *is* his duty. He may be mistaken; and a very little reflection may be sufficient to show him that he is. If, after a man has given a subject his best thought, analysis and reflection, and after he has got all the light and assistance he can get from others, he still thinks it his duty to take a certain course, *then* it would be proper for him to follow his convictions. In the case you mention, if your conscience upbraids you for working as you say you are now working, then you should give the matter your best attention, and seeking aid from above, follow the dictates of your conscience. No man can continue to do what his conscience condemns, without becoming degraded in his own estimation, nor without doing serious injury to his moral nature.

ERIE says, "Allow me to correct a 'Young Reader's' decision on the grammar question—(see LEDGER of May 16th)—sentence: 'He possessed what is regarded as the first requisite of a good soldier, ability to command.' In the above sentence, *what* is a compound relative and equivalent to *that which*, and the antecedent *that* is the object of *possessed*. The relative *which* is the subject of *is regarded*. '*As the first requisite of a good soldier*' is a complex phrase. '*As the first requisite*' is the principal phrase, prepositional in form, adverbial in office, and introduced by the preposition *as*, and *requisite* being the object, is certainly in the *objective* case. '*Ability to command*' is a logical adjunct of the compound relative *what*, and is not grammatically connected with the sentence, and is consequently in the *independent case*."

C. K. M.—To solve whatever difficulty may unexpectedly be presented to us is no easy matter; most questions require consideration, and generally some search, previously to an answer being given. Sometimes we are unable to give a satisfactory one at the moment, and the subject is then deferred, when it not unfrequently happens that the inquiry is subsequently forgotten altogether. We, therefore, claim the indulgence of our correspondents when they find their names omitted; it is rather the consequence of a desire to please all than the neglect of any one.

S. K.—It may be that there is somebody in the world who has a private income of one hundred millions of dollars a year, but we do not know of any such individual, perhaps because his income is so very private that a knowledge of it has not been suffered to get abroad. Such an income as that would be a little less than two hundred and seventy-four thousand dollars a day, which is rather more than any private individual could possibly have use for, even though he had an extravagant wife.

A YOUNG LADY.—We do not see how we can help "A YOUNG LADY," though very desirous of doing so; since, for cleaning kid gloves, she finds the turpentine too expensive, and the soap renders the leather harsh and discolors it. Let her try the very smallest quantity of sweet oil, applied just before the gloves are quite dry, it will, doubtless, soften the kid, and cannot possibly injure it; or a little milk might be even better.

THEOS.—*Divine* has several meanings. We speak of the "Divine Raphael." Lovers call their sweethearts divine. Everything that is excellent partakes of the divine, and is divine in the minor sense; but only the universal deity is divine in the major sense. Before men argue about such things, they should settle the meaning of terms, or it ends only in a word of controversy.

COSMETICS.—We have before stated that oatmeal mixed with soap is a safe preparation; and that not more than one hundredth part that the advertisements say about such things can be believed. Violet powder is merely starch scented with orris root: it is used when the skin is very tender, in order to prevent chafing, particularly with infants.

ALABAMA.—You could doubtless buy a plantation cheap in some of the Cotton States, but what would it be worth in these times? You could not work it, and would yourself be conscripted into the rebel army, if not hanged or assassinated. Your scheme is utterly wild and impracticable.

M. S.—You will have to conciliate the mother of the young lady, before you can hope to succeed in your wooing. It is perfectly proper for the mother to keep thorough guard over her daughter, and for the daughter to give implicit heed to the wishes of her mother.

APPLE STAINS.—Nothing will remove the stain made by the juice of apples or pears but the sweet air of heaven. Frequent washing, and hanging out the stained article, particularly when the air is frosty, will, in time, probably, have the desired effect.

BRITON.—You are right in regard to the primogeniture and entail question. The Constitution of the United States does not contain anything about it; but they are forbidden by the Constitution of the State of New York, and by the constitutions or laws of other States.

J. R. C.—If you have not the courage to ask the parents of the young lady for her hand, you must wait until you can muster up sufficient strength of mind for the performance of that duty.

X.—We do not help office seekers to procure Government situations; if we did, we should have plenty of business. Our correspondent should get acquainted with a toad-eater of the powers that be.

B. P. must have patience till his voice breaks. We cannot tell what may be the result; however, when it is breaking he should sing solos, all alone, up in the garret, or out in the cow-house, if he has one.

CARRIE AND CLARA.—It is no disgrace to be an old maid. But it may be disgraceful for an old maid to *think* it is a disgrace to be one.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*